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HISTORY OF THE JEWS IN RUSSIA AND POLAND FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES UNTIL THE PRESENT DAY

BY

S. M. DUBNOW

TRANSLATED FROM THE RUSSIAN

BY

I. FRIEDLAENDER

VOLUME III

FROM THE ACCESSION OF NICHOLAS II. UNTIL THE PRESENT DAY
WITH BIBLIOGRAPHY AND INDEX

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NOTE

The present volume, which concludes Dubnow's "History of the Jews in Russia-Poland," contains, in addition to the text, an extensive bibliography and an index to the entire work. In the bibliography an enormous amount of material has been collected, and it is arranged in such a way as to enable the reader to ascertain the sources upon which the author drew. It is thus in the nature of notes, and is therefore arranged according to the chapters of the book. The index, which has been prepared with the utmost care by the translator, is really a synopsis of Jewish history in Russia and Poland, and its usefulness cannot be over-rated.

Professor Friedlaender, the translator of this work, who left the United States at the beginning of this year, did not see the proof of the bibliography and index.

The tragic news has just reached this country that Professor Friedlaender was murdered under the most revolting circumstances. An eminent scholar and writer has thus been removed from American Jewry, and the entire house of Israel together with the Jewish Publication Society of America, on whose committee Professor Friedlaender served with conspicuous merit for a number of years, mourns this irreparable loss.

JULY, 1920.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
XXXI. THE ACCESSION OF NICHOLAS II.	
1. Continued Policy of Oppression.....	7
2. The Martyrdom of the Moscow Community..	12
3. Restrictions in the Right of Residence.....	15
4. The Economic Collapse of Russian Jewry....	22
5. Professional and Educational Restrictions...	26
6. Anti-Semitic Propaganda and Pogroms.....	31
XXXII. THE NATIONAL AWAKENING.	
1. The Rise of Political Zionism.....	40
2. Spiritual Zionism, or Ahad-Ha'amism.....	48
3. Spiritual Nationalism, or National-Cultural Autonomism	51
4. The Jewish Socialistic Movement.....	55
5. The Revival of Jewish Letters.....	58
XXXIII. THE KISHINEV MASSACRE.	
1. Pogroms as a Counter-Revolutionary Measure	66
2. The Organized Kishinev Butchery.....	69
3. Echoes of the Kishinev Tragedy.....	76
4. Doctor Herzl's Visit to Russia.....	82
XXXIV. CONTINUED POGROMS AND THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR.	
1. The Pogrom at Homel and the Jewish Self- Defence	87
2. The Kishinev Massacre at the Bar of Russian Justice	90
3. The Jews in the Russo-Japanese War.....	94
4. The "Political Spring".....	97
5. The Homel Pogrom Before the Russian Courts	101
XXXV. THE REVOLUTION OF 1905 AND THE FIGHT FOR EMAN- CIPATION.	
1. The Jews in the Revolutionary Movement...	105
2. The Struggle for Equal Rights.....	108
3. The "Black Hundred" and the "Patriotic" Pogroms	113
4. The Jewish Franchise	121

CHAPTER	PAGE
XXXVI. THE COUNTER-REVOLUTION AND THE OCTOBER MAS-	
SACRES.	
1. The Fiendish Designs of the "Black Hun-	
dred"	124
2. The Russian St. Bartholomew Night	127
3. The Undaunted Struggle for Equal Rights....	131
4. The Jewish Question Before the First Duma	135
5. The Spread of Anarchy and the Second Duma	139
XXXVII. EXTERNAL OPPRESSION AND INTERNAL CONSOLIDATION.	
1. The New Alignments Within Russian Jewry..	143
2. The Triumph of the "Black Hundred".....	149
3. The Third, or Black, Duma.....	153
4. New Jewish Disabilities.....	156
5. The Spiritual Revival of Russian Jewry.....	160
RUSSIAN JEWRY SINCE 1911.....	164
BIBLIOGRAPHY	171
INDEX	205

CHAPTER XXXI

THE ACCESSION OF NICHOLAS II.

1. CONTINUED POLICY OF OPPRESSION

In the course of the nineteenth century every change of throne in Russia was accompanied by a change of policy. Each new reign formed, at least in its beginning, a contrast to the one which had preceded it. The reigns of Alexander I. and Alexander II. marked a departure in the direction of liberalism; those of Nicholas I. and Alexander III. were a return to the ideas of reaction. In accordance with this historic schedule, Alexander III. should have been followed by a sovereign of liberal tendencies. But in this case the optimistic expectations with which the new ruler was welcomed both by his Russian and his Jewish subjects were doomed to disappointment. The reign of Nicholas II. proved the most gloomy and most reactionary of all. A man of limited intelligence, he attempted to play the rôle of an unlimited autocrat, fighting in blind rage against the cause of liberty.

This reactionary tendency came to light in the very beginning of the new reign. During the first few months after the accession of Nicholas II. to the throne—between November, 1894, and January, 1895—the liberal Zemstvo assemblies of nine governments,¹ in presenting addresses of loyalty to the new Tzar, were bold enough to voice the hope that he would eventually invite the representatives of these autonomous institutions

[¹ See on the Zemstvos, vol. II, p. 173, n. 1.]

to participate in the legislative acts of the Government. This first timid request for constitutional rights met with a harsh and clumsy rebuff. In his reply to the deputation representing the nobility, the Zemstvos, and the municipalities, which appeared in the Winter Palace on January 17, 1895, to convey to him the greetings of the Russian people, the Tzar made the following pronouncement:

In several Zemstvo assemblies there have been heard lately the voices of men carried away by preposterous delusions concerning the participation of the representatives of the Zemstvos in the affairs of the inner administration. Let everybody know that I shall guard the principle of autocracy as firmly and uncompromisingly as it was guarded by my never-to-be-forgotten deceased parent.

This veiled threat was enough to intimidate the faint-hearted constitutionalists. It was universally felt that the autocratic régime was still firmly entrenched and that the old constitution of "enforced safety"¹—this charter of privileges bestowed upon the police to the disadvantage of the people—was still unshaken. The hope of seeing Russia transformed from a state based upon brute force into a body politic resting upon law and order was dashed to the ground.

The Jews, too, were quick to realize that the war which had been waged against them by Alexander III. for fourteen long years was far from being at an end. True, the addresses of welcome presented in 1895 by the Jewish communities of Russia to the young Tzar on the occasion of his marriage elicited an official expression of thanks, which was not marred by any rebuke for harboring "preposterous delusions." But this was purely for the reason that these addresses were not tainted by

[¹ See vol. II, p. 246.]

any allusions to the hopes for emancipation entertained by the Jews. There was nothing, indeed, which might have warranted such hopes. The same dignitaries who, under Alexander III., had stood forth as the champions of savage anti-Semitic policies, remained at the helm of Russian affairs: Pobyedonostzev, the head of the Holy Synod, Durnovo, the Minister of the Interior—towards the end of 1895 he made room for Goremykin, who was not a whit less reactionary—and Witte, the double-faced Minister of Finance, who was anxious at that time to fall in line with the reactionary influences then in vogue. The thoughts which occupied Pobyedonostzev's mind at the beginning of the new reign may be gauged from the report submitted by him to the Tzar in 1895, concerning the state of affairs in the Greek-Orthodox Church. The "Grand Inquisitor" was deeply worried by the alleged fact that the Jews were exercising a dangerous influence over the religious life of their Christian domestics:

The minors, after living among Jews for several years, prove entirely forgetful of the Greek-Orthodox faith. But even the beliefs of the adults are being undermined. The priests who listen to the confessions of the domestics employed in Jewish homes are stricken with horror on learning of the abominable blasphemies uttered by the Jews against Christianity, the Savior, and the Holy Virgin, which, through the domestics, are likely to gain currency among the people.

These charges, which might have been bodily quoted from the sinister writings of the mediæval guardians of the Church, were intended as a means of preparing the young sovereign for a proper understanding of the Jewish problem. They were brought forward by the procurator-in-chief of the Holy Synod, the same ecclesiastical functionary who inflicted severe

persecutions on the Russian dissidents and soon afterwards forced the Dukhobortzy, an Evangelistic sect, to leave their native land and to seek refuge in Canada. Having failed to realize his great ambition—to clear Russia of its Jewish population, with the help of Baron Hirsch's millions¹—Pobyedonostzev resumed his professional duties, which were those of a procurator² of Jewry on behalf of the Holy Synod, the *sanctum officium* of the militant Greek-Orthodox Church.

Not content with brandishing his rusty ecclesiastical sword, Pobyedonostzev resorted to secular weapons in his fight against the hated tribe. When, in 1898, the Council of the Jewish Colonization Association in Paris sent a delegation to St. Petersburg to apply to the Government for permission to settle Russian Jews as agricultural farmers in Russia itself, Pobyedonostzev replied: "Nos cadres ne sont pas prêts pour vous recevoir,"³ and he went out of his way to explain to the delegates that the Jews were a very clever people, intellectually and culturally superior to the Russians, and, therefore, dangerous to them: "The Jews are displacing us, and this does not suit us." When questioned as to the future of Russian Jewry under the system of uninterrupted persecutions, Pobyedonostzev on one occasion made the following candid statement: "One-third will die out, one-third will leave the country, and one-third will be completely dissolved in the surrounding population."

Such being the attitude towards the Jewish problem of the ruling spheres of Russia, any improvement in the situation of

[¹ See vol. II, p. 421.]

[² The Russian title for a prosecuting attorney.]

[³ "Our frame (of society) is not ready to receive you."]

Russian Jewry was manifestly out of the question. Even where such an improvement might have been found to tally with the anti-Semitic policies of the Government, it was ruled out as soon as it bade fair to benefit the Jews. Thus, when in 1895, the governor of Vilna, in his "most humble report" to the Tzar, advocated the desirability of abrogating the Pale of Settlement for the purpose "of weakening the detrimental influence of Jewry," since the latter constituted a majority of the population in the cities of the Western region,¹ Nicholas II. penned the following resolution:² "I am far from sharing this view of the governor." The leaders of Russian Jewry knew full well that the wind which was blowing from the heights of the Russian throne was unfavorable to them, and their initial hopefulness gave way speedily to a feeling of depression. A memorandum drafted at that time by prominent Jews of St. Petersburg, with the intention of submitting it to one of the highest functionaries at the Russian court, mirrors this pessimistic frame of mind:

The Russian Jews are deprived of that powerful lever for intellectual and moral advancement which is designated as the hope for a better future. They are fully aware of the fact that the highest authority in the land, influenced by the distorted information concerning the Jews, which is systematically presented to it by officials acting from avaricious or other selfish motives, is exceedingly unfavorable to the Jews. They must resign themselves to the fact that there is actually no possibility of directing the attention of the Tzar and Sovereign to the true state of affairs, and that even those dignitaries who themselves act justly and tolerantly towards the Jews are afraid of putting in a good word for them for fear of being charged with favoritism towards them.

[¹ See on this term vol. II, p. 16, n. 1.]

[² See on the meaning of this term, vol. I, p. 25, n. 1.]

2. THE MARTYRDOM OF THE MOSCOW COMMUNITY

The attitude which officials of high rank were prone to adopt towards the Jews was luridly illustrated at that time in Moscow. It will be remembered that the small Jewish colony which had been left in the second Russian capital after the cruel expulsions of 1891 was barred from holding religious services in its large synagogue which had been closed by order of Alexander III.¹ In view of the forthcoming festivities in honor of the coronation of Nicholas II., which were to be held in Moscow in the spring of 1896, the representatives of the Jewish community of the second Russian capital petitioned the governor-general of Moscow, Grand Duke Sergius Alexandrovitch, to secure for them the Tzar's permission to have their synagogue open at least during the coronation days, "as a special act of grace, in order that the Jews of Moscow may be given a chance to celebrate the joyful event with due solemnity." But the grand duke, maddened by Jew-hatred, notified the petitioners through the Chief of Police that their petition was "an insolent violation of the imperial will" and could not be considered.

The martyrdom of the Moscow community, the heritage of the past reign, stood out like a black stain even upon the gloomy background of the new era. An imperial ukase issued in 1892 had decreed that the structure of the sealed-up Moscow synagogue should be sold to the highest bidder unless it was converted into a charitable institution.² The community was naturally anxious to prevent the desecration of its sanctuary and to preserve the edifice for better days to come. With this end in view it placed in the synagogue building

[¹ See vol. II, p. 423.]

[² See vol. II, p. 424.]

the trade school for Jewish children which had been established in memory of Alexander II. The anti-Semitic authorities of Moscow scented in this step a wicked design. The governor-general got into communication with the Ministers of the Interior and of Public Instruction, and, as a result, on May 27, 1896, the executive board of the Moscow community received the following order: To stop the admission of pupils to the trade school and to close the school altogether after the completion of the prescribed course of studies by the present contingent of students. Thereupon the Jews of Moscow made another attempt to save their synagogue by transferring hither their school and asylum for poor and orphaned children, the so-called Talmud Torah. This attempt, too, was frustrated by the Muscovite Hamans. On October 28, 1897, the governor-general announced that, after consultation with the Minister of the Interior, the decision had been reached to close the asylum, which sheltered about one hundred poor children, on the fanciful ground that these children might just as well receive their instruction in Russian educational establishments. The underlying motive of the new order was unmistakably revealed in its latter part: Unless in the course of two months the building of the synagogue will be reconstructed and so altered as to be fitted for a hospital or a similar charitable institution, it will be sold at public auction.

Once more the Jewish community endeavored to save its sanctuary, which its enemies had made up their minds to destroy. The synagogue structure was rebuilt to meet the purposes of a hospital and a shelter. But the commission appointed by the governor-general to examine the alterations found that they were not sufficiently extensive and therefore suggested

that the interior of the synagogue should be entirely remodelled so as to exclude the possibility of its ever being used for devotional purposes. The struggle centering around the alterations dragged on for another eight years—until the revolution of 1905 and the assassination of the ferocious governor-general. It was then that the Jews finally succeeded in releasing their sanctuary from the death sentence which had been passed upon it.

The motive which animated the Muscovite Jew-haters was perfectly evident: it was their fervent desire to wipe out the last remnants of the local Jewish community by subjecting the Jews to religious and administrative persecutions and thereby compelling them to flee from the center of Greek Orthodoxy. The growth of the Jewish settlement at Moscow was checked in ruthless fashion. The Jewish artisans had been expelled as far back as 1891, but the Jewish merchants who purchased their right of residence in the second Russian capital at the annual cost of one thousand rubles—the tax levied on first guild members—had been allowed to remain. Moreover, as the largest industrial center of Russia, Moscow naturally attracted a goodly number of Jewish merchants who came there temporarily on business. These “newcomers” were handled more severely than are alien enemies in war-time. Police detectives prowled about on the streets and at the railroad stations, seizing passers-by who happened to exhibit a “Semitic” countenance, and dragging them to the police stations, “with a view to the examination of their right of residence in Moscow.” The unfortunate Jews, whose documents did not comply with all the technicalities of the law, were expelled at once. The *Moscow Police News* carried a regular

advertisement offering a reward for the capture of "rightless" Jews. In October, 1897, the Moscow Chief of Police announced a premium of equal amount for the capture of one Jew or of two burglars.¹

Finally, the Russian Government took a most effective step towards preventing the increase of the Jewish population of Moscow. On January 22, 1899, an imperial ukase was issued forthwith prohibiting Jewish merchants of the first guild from settling in Moscow, unless they shall have obtained special permission from the Minister of Finance and from the governor-general of Moscow, it being beforehand agreed that no such permission should be granted. The same ukase enacted a number of offensive discriminations against the Jewish merchants already settled in Moscow by depriving them of their vote in the commercial associations, and by other similar devices. On a subsequent occasion the admission was candidly made that all these measures were prompted by the desire "to rid as far as possible the government of Moscow of the Jews already settled there on a legal basis."

3. RESTRICTIONS IN THE RIGHT OF RESIDENCE

Whereas the régime of Grand Duke Sergius in Moscow represented an acute stage of Judaeophobia, manifesting itself in cruelties of an exceptional character, the central Government in St. Petersburg exhibited the same disease in a more

¹ These barbarities were suspended only for a few days during that year, while the International Congress of Medicine was holding its sessions in Moscow. The police were ordered to stop these street raids upon the Jews for fear of compromising Russia in the eyes of Western Europe, since it was to be expected that the membership of the Congress would include medical celebrities with "Semitic" features.

"normal" form. Here, the oppression of the Jews was pursued systematically and quietly, and was carried on as one of the most important functions of the public administration. The sacrosanct institution of the Pale of Settlement and the other mainstays of political anti-Semitism were zealously guarded by the faithful watchdogs of Russian reaction—the various Ministers of the Interior who followed one another between the years 1895 and 1904: Durnovo (until the autumn of 1895), Goremykin (1896-1899), Sipyaghin (1899-1902), and Plehve (1902-1904). True, during the régime of the last two Ministers the anti-Semitic temperature rose above normal, but it was only due to the fact that the increased revolutionary propaganda of those days had generally stimulated the powers of reaction to a greater display of energy. Quite aside from these exceptional conditions, the rigid consistency in enforcing the restrictive laws was sufficient to account for many tragedies in the life of the Jews, while the despotism of the provincial authorities aggravated the situation still further and turned the tragedies into catastrophes.

As far as the Pale of Settlement is concerned, the Government continued its old-time policy of cooping up the Jews within the area of the cities and towns by shielding the villages carefully against the influx of Jews. Since the promulgation of the "Temporary Rules" in 1882, the authorities of St. Petersburg had been aiming at the gradual elimination of those rural Jewish "old timers" who had been allowed under those rules to remain in the villages.¹ They had been looking for-

¹ The "Temporary Rules" were not given retroactive force, and those settled in the villages before the promulgation of the law of May 3, 1882, were accordingly permitted to stay there. [See vol. II, p. 311.]

ward to the time when the eyes of the Russian moujik would no more be offended by the sight of a Jew. But this pious wish did not materialize quickly enough. Several governors put forth the simple proposition to expel all Jews from the villages, not excluding those who had been settled there for a long time. This step, however, was deemed too radical. The Minister of Finance, Witte, wished to solve the problem in a different way. He sought to persuade the Tzar that the introduction of the state liquor monopoly would automatically have the effect of forcing the Jews to leave the country-side, inasmuch as the liquor traffic formed the principal occupation of the village Jews.

Witte's conjecture was to a certain degree borne out by the facts. By the end of the nineties the Jewish country population of Russia had been considerably reduced. Nevertheless there was no relief in sight. For the lust of the administration had grown in proportion. The governors and the other gubernatorial authorities resorted to all kinds of cunning devices to force the Jews out of the villages or out of the railroad stations which were situated outside the town limits. The Christian land-owners frequently complained about these deportations, and petitioned the governors to permit the Jewish grain merchants, who were engaged in buying and shipping the grain from the manorial store-houses, to reside at the railroad stations. The Senate was compelled over and over again to pass upon the appeals of illegally deported Jews and to enter into an examination of all kinds of hair-splitting questions involved in the manipulation of the anti-Jewish laws by the lower courts, whether, for instance, an old-time Jewish villager who returns to his home after a brief absence is to be regarded as

a new settler who has no right to live in the country, or whether a Jew who lives on an estate which happens to be situated in two contiguous villages is allowed to remove from the one to the other. As a rule the authorities decided these questions against the Jews, though the most revolting decisions of this kind were later reversed by the Senate.

In connection with the prohibition of residence outside the cities, a new problem had arisen in Jewish life—the “summer resort question.” The authorities frequently prohibited Jewish families from spending the summer in the outskirts of the cities if a particular resort or cottage was found to be situated outside the city line. Thousands of Jewish families were thus deprived of an opportunity to rest in God’s free nature during the summer months, and to breathe the fresh air of the fields and forests, for no other reason than that they were Jews—a new variety of territorially affixed city serfs.

The law was just as merciless in the case of Jews afflicted with disease. The watering-places situated outside the towns were barred to Jewish sufferers who wished to take a cure there. The Crimean watering-place Yalta, in the neighborhood of the imperial summer resort Livadia, was the object of particular vigilance, having been barred to the Jews by order of the dying Alexander III.¹ The Jewish consumptives who had managed to obtain “illegal” access to this spa were pitilessly expelled. The following incident, which was reported at that time in the Russian press, may serve as an illustration of this ruthless policy:

The wife of a [Jewish] physician had come to Yalta to improve her shattered health. While she was suffering from severe blood-

[¹ See vol. II, p. 428 *et seq.*]

spitting, a policeman invaded the bedroom of the sick woman, insisting on her giving a written pledge to leave the place within twenty-four hours. The patient was terribly frightened. On the following day the deportation was stopped, in consequence of the testimony of her physician that the slightest motion was fraught with danger to the invalid. But the fright and uncertainty had intensified the cough; the young woman became worse, and soon afterwards died.

As it happened, the action of the police was subsequently found to be entirely unwarranted; for, as the wife of a physician, this victim of bureaucratic heartlessness was, even according to the letter of the law, entitled to the right of residence in Yalta.

A similar case was that of a sick Jewish student who had been sent by his physicians to Yalta to cure his lungs. He was expelled in the dead of winter and deported under a police convoy, together with a batch of prisoners, to Sevastopol, notwithstanding the fact that he was in a feverish condition. The correspondent of a local paper in Sevastopol reported that "along the entire road from the harbor to the prison, which was traversed by the batch, passers-by would stop in their walk, staggered by the extraordinary spectacle." The sufferer appealed to the Senate, but the latter found that the orders of the police "contained nothing contrary to the law." The highest tribunal of the empire went with equanimity on record that a Jewish student was liable to the penalty of being arrested and marched under a police escort, together with criminal offenders, for an attempt to heal his lungs in the warm southern climate.

But no place in the empire could vie as regards hostility to the Jews with the city of Kiev—this inferno of Russian

Israel. Though surrounded on all sides by a string of towns and townlets with a dense Jewish population, the southwestern metropolis was guarded by a host of police watchdogs against the invasion of "aliens." Apart from the "privileged" Jews who formed part of the permanent population, the police were forced to admit into the city Jewish visitors who came to Kiev for a few days to attend to their affairs. Yet, haunted by the fear lest these visitors might stay there too long, the police arranged *oblavas*, or raids, to hunt them down like stray dogs. About once a week, during the night, the police would raid certain hostelries in which the Jews were wont to stop, put those that were caught under arrest, and then expel them from the confines of the city. This additional heavy "night work" called for a larger police staff, and to meet this increased expenditure, an annual sum of 15,000 rubles was appropriated—from the proceeds of the Jewish meat tax. This revenue, collected from the Jews for the purpose of maintaining the charitable and educational institutions of the Jewish communities, was now used to pay the police agents to enable them to hunt down these Jews and expel them in merciless fashion. To put it more plainly, the convict, after being sentenced to be hanged, was forced to buy the rope. The methods of the Russian inquisition gradually reached the top notch of efficiency. Even the "*Kievlanin*" ("The Kievian"), the anti-Semitic official organ of Kiev, was bound to confess on one occasion that "in the course of the month of July (of the year 1901) things have taken place in Kiev which are hardly conceivable."

As far as the general disabilities are concerned, the entire area of the Russian empire outside the Pale of Settlement,

though open to foreigners of all nationalities, remained hermetically closed to the Jewish citizens of Russia, and the borders of that prohibited area were guarded even more rigorously than they had been during the previous reign. In the consistent enforcement of this principle the Government did not shrink from the most revolting extremes. A law passed in 1896 interdicted Jewish soldiers from spending outside the Pale of Settlement even the brief leave of absence which they were granted during their term of military service. A Jewish soldier serving in a regiment which was stationed, let us say, in St. Petersburg, Moscow, or even in far-off Siberia, was forced, under this law, to travel hundreds and even thousands of miles to the Pale of Settlement to spend his month of furlough there, being denied the right to remain in the city in which he was discharging his military duty, and it made no difference even if the furlough was granted to him for the purpose of recuperating his health.

In many places of the empire, the whimsicality of the local authorities in construing the law of residence was of a nature to suggest that they had no other end in view except that of making sport of the Jews. The administration of Siberia, for instance, invented the following regulation: a Jewish merchant or artisan who is registered in one of the Siberian cities shall have the right only to live in the particular city of his registration, and in no other. Since very many Jews resided outside the localities of their accidental registration, a transmigration of Siberian Jewry was the result. The Jews registered, *e. g.*, in Tomsk, though they might have lived from the day of their birth in Irkutsk, were deported in batches to Tomsk, meeting on the way parties of exiled Jews from

Tomsk who had the misfortune of having their names entered upon the records of Irkutsk. Human beings were shuffled like a pack of cards. This revolting practice of the Siberian authorities, which had begun at the end of the preceding reign, was sustained by the Senate in a decision handed down in 1897.

4. THE ECONOMIC COLLAPSE OF RUSSIAN JEWRY

The result of all these persecutions was the complete economic collapse of Russian Jewry. Speaking generally, the economic structure of the Russian Jews experienced violent upheavals during the first years of Nicholas II.'s reign. The range of Jewish economic endeavor, circumscribed though it was, was narrowed more and more. In 1894, the law placing the liquor trade under Government control was put into effect by Witte, the Minister of Finance. Catering to the prejudices of the ruling spheres of Russia, Witte had already endeavored to convince Alexander III. that the liquor state monopoly would have the effect of completely undermining "Jewish exploitation," the latter being primarily bound up with the sale of liquor in the towns and villages. In view of this, the monopoly was introduced with particular zeal in the western governments, where a little later, in the course of 1896-1898, during the reign of Nicholas II., all private pot-houses were replaced by official liquor stores, the so-called "imperial bar-rooms." In consequence of this reform, tens of thousands of Jewish families who had derived their livelihood either directly from the liquor trade, or indirectly from occupations connected with it, such as the keeping of inns and hostelries, were deprived of their means of subsistence. It goes without saying that, as far as the moral aspect of the problem was concerned, the best elements of Russian Jewry welcomed this reform,

which bade fair to wipe out an ugly stain on the escutcheon of the Jewish people—the liquor traffic bequeathed to the Jews by ancient Poland. Known as the most sober people on earth, the Jews had been placed in the tragic position that thousands of them, in their search for a piece of bread, were forced to serve as a medium for promoting the pernicious Russian drunkenness. The memory of the days when the Jewish saloon was the breeding-place of pogroms, in which the Russian peasants and burghers filled themselves with Jewish alcohol to fortify themselves in their infamous work of demolishing the homes of the Jews, was still fresh in their minds. Cheerfully would the Jewish people have yielded its monopoly of the liquor trade to the Russian bar-room keepers and to the Russian Government who seemed genuinely attracted toward it, had it only been allowed to pursue other methods of earning a livelihood. But in closing the avenue of the liquor traffic to two hundred thousand Jews, the Government did not even think of removing the special restrictions which barred their way to other lines of endeavor. Having been robbed of the scanty livelihood they derived from their country inns, thousands of rural victims of the state monopoly flocked into the cities, only to clash with a host of urban victims of the same reform who had also been deprived of their means of sustenance. The growth of the proletariat within the Pale of Settlement, both in business and in the trades, assumed appalling proportions. The observers of economic life in the Pale, such as the well-known Russian economist Subbotin and others, called attention to the frightful increase of pauperism in that region. Between 1894 and 1898 the number of Jewish families in need of assistance increased twenty-seven per cent. as compared with former years. In 1897, the number of Jews

without definite occupations amounted in certain cities to fifty per cent and more. The number of destitute Jews applying for help before the Passover festival reached unheard of proportions, amounting in Odessa, Vilna, Minsk, Kovno, and other cities to forty and even fifty per cent of the total Jewish population. The crop failures of 1899 and 1900 in the south of Russia resulted in a terrible famine among the impecunious Jewish masses. Whereas the peasants who suffered from the same calamity received financial assistance from the Government, the Jews had to resort to self-help, to the collection of funds throughout the empire to which only here and there liberal Christians added their mites.

Many of these Jewish proletarians were willing to take up agriculture, but the "Temporary Rules" of 1882 blocked their way to the country-side, and made it impossible for them to buy or even lease a piece of land. Prominent Jews of St. Petersburg, such as Baron Günzburg and others, petitioned the Government to allow the Jews to purchase small parcels of land for personal use, but, after long deliberations, their petition was rejected. Thus, at the end of the nineteenth century, the ruling spheres of the Russian empire proved more anti-Semitic than at the beginning of the same century, when the Government of Alexander I. and even that of Nicholas I. had endeavored to promote agriculture among the Jews and had established the Jewish agricultural colonies in the south of Russia.¹ The mania of oppression went so far as to prohibit

¹ According to the statistics of 1898-1901, some 150,000 Jews in Russia engaged in agrarian pursuits. Of these, 51,539 were occupied with raising corn in the colonies, 64,563 engaged in special branches of agrarian economy, 19,930 held land as owners or lessees, and 12,901 were engaged in temporary farm labor.

the Jews from buying or leasing parcels of land which were part of a city, but happened to be situated outside the city line. A rich Jew of Minsk, by the name of Pollak, petitioned, in 1897, the local Town Council to sell him a piece of suburban property for the establishment of a Jewish agricultural farm, but his petition was refused. This refusal was thoroughly consistent. For the fact that the Jews were forbidden to own land made the training of Jews in the art of agriculture entirely superfluous. It may be added that this prohibition of land ownership was upheld by the Government even in the case of the Jewish students who had completed their course in the school of the Jewish Agricultural Farm near Odessa.

Similar methods were employed to check the development of arts and crafts, which were widely represented among the Jews, but stood on a very low technical level. Even the efforts to organize mutual help among the working classes were blocked by the Government in all kinds of ways. The well-known Jewish millionaire, Brodski, of Kiev, wishing to assist the toiling masses without distinction of creed, offered to open a trade bank in that city and to contribute towards that purpose the sum of 120,000 rubles. When, in 1895, he submitted the constitution of the proposed bank to the local authorities for their approval, he was required to insert a clause to the effect that the directors and the chairman of the bank council should always be Christians and that the council itself should not include more than one Jewish member. To this insolent demand Brodski made the only fitting retort: "Being myself a Jew, I cannot possibly agree that the constitution of an establishment which is to be founded with the money contributed by me and which is to bear my name shall contain

restrictions affecting my coreligionists." He naturally withdrew his offer, and Kiev was deprived of a trade bank. The fact that the failure of the project also affected the Christian artisans did not disturb the authorities in the least. It was enough of a compensation that the Jews were made to suffer not only materially, but also morally, and the purpose of the highly-placed Jew-baiters was accomplished.

5. PROFESSIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL RESTRICTIONS

In the domain of those liberal professions to which the Jewish intellectuals, being barred from entering the civil service, were particularly attracted, the law went to almost any length in its endeavor to keep them closed to the Jews. The legal career had been blocked to them ever since the passage of the law of 1889, which made the admission of a properly qualified Jew to the bar dependent upon the granting of a special permission by the Minister of Justice. In the course of a whole decade, the Minister found it possible to grant this permission only to one Jew, who, it may be added, had sat on the bench for twenty-five years—there were two or three such "relics," dating back to the liberal era of Alexander II. In consequence of this provision, the proportion of Jews at the bar, which prior to the enactment of the restriction had reached from fourteen to twenty-two per cent, was reduced to nine per cent. In 1897, a committee appointed by the Government was considering the proposal to place the disability on the statute books and to establish a ten per cent norm for Jewish lawyers. The reasons advanced by the committee for the proposed restriction were of the distinctly mediæval variety:

The conduct of a lawyer is determined by the impulses of his will, of his conscience,—in other words, that sphere of his inner life which finds its manifestation in religion. Now the admission of Jews constitutes a menace, resulting from views peculiar to the Jewish race, which are contrary to Christian morality.

Subsequently, the champions of "Christian morality" on the staff of the Ministry of Justice bethought themselves that it might even be better and nobler to stop the admission of Jews to the bar altogether, and the proposal regarding the percentage norm was tabled. Hundreds upon hundreds of young Jews who had completed their legal education at the universities, or who had acted as assistants to sworn attorneys, saw once more their hopes for the legitimate pursuit of their profession vanish into the air.

Jewish physicians were restricted to private practice and robbed of their right to occupy a Government or public position. Even the autonomous Zemstvo institutions adopted more and more the practice of refusing to appoint Jews, and very frequently the printed advertisements of the Zemstvos offering medical positions contained the stipulation *kromye yevreyev* ("except the Jews").

The scholastic education of the Jewish children was throttled in the same pitiless manner as theretofore. The disgraceful school norm which had been introduced in 1887¹ performed with ever-increasing relentlessness its task of dooming to spiritual death the Jewish youths who were knocking at the doors of the gymnazia and universities. In the beginning of 1898, the post of Minister of Public Instruction, which had been occupied by Dyelanov, was entrusted to Professor Bogolepov of Moscow. While Dyelanov had been occasionally inclined

¹ See vol. II, p. 350.

to soften the rigor of the school norm—it was commonly rumored that this good-natured dignitary could not bear to see a woman cry, and the tearful entreaties of the mothers of the rejected scholars made him sanction the admission of a certain number of Jewish children over and above the established percentage norm—his successor Bogolepov, an academic teacher who had become a gendarme of education, was imperious to any sentiment of pity. In the course of the three years of his administration, he not only refused to admit the slightest departure from the established norm, but attempted to curtail it still further. Thus, orders were issued to calculate the percentage norm of the Jewish applicants for admission to the universities not in its relation to the total number of the annual admissions, but separately for each faculty (1898-1899). This provision was designed to limit the number of Jewish students who flocked to the medical and legal faculties, since, in view of the fact that the Jews were entirely barred from appointments in the general educational institutions, the other faculties did not offer them even a 'sporting chance of earning a livelihood. The ruthlessness displayed by the Ministry of Public Instruction towards the Jewish youth was officially justified on the ground that certain elements among them were affiliated with the revolutionary movement which, just at that time, had assumed particular intensity in the Russian student body. This sentiment was openly voiced in a circular of the Ministry, issued on May 26, 1901, which makes the following statement: "The disorders which took place at the end of the nineties in the institutions of higher learning testified to the fact that the instigators of these disorders were, to a large extent, persons of non-Russian extraction."

Bogolepov himself, the reactionary Minister of enlightenment, fell a victim of this agitation among the student body. He died from the bullet of a Terrorist who happened to be of unadulterated Russian extraction. His successor, General Vannovski (1901-1902), though endeavoring to assuage the university disorders by a policy of "kindly solicitude," maintained the former uncompromising attitude as far as the Jews were concerned. In view of the fact that, in spite of all restrictions, the ratio of Jewish students at all universities actually exceeded the norm prescribed by law, the new Minister decreed that the percentage of Jewish admissions be temporarily curtailed in the following proportion: Two per cent for the capitals (instead of the former three per cent), three per cent for the universities outside of the Pale of Settlement (instead of five per cent), and seven per cent for the Pale of Settlement (instead of ten per cent).

Even the restrictions placed upon the admission of the Jews to the gymnazia were intensified. In 1901, Jewish children who had graduated from a pro-gymnazium¹ were forbidden to continue their education in the advanced classes of a gymnazium unless there was a free Jewish vacancy within the percentage norm—a truly miraculous contingency. The same policy was extended to the commercial schools established with funds which were provided by the merchant class and the bulk of which came from Jews. In the commercial schools maintained by the commercial associations Jewish children were admitted only in proportion to the contributions of the Jewish merchants towards the upkeep of the particular school. In

[¹A pro-gymnazium is made up of the six (originally four) lower grades of a gymnazium which embraces eight grades.]

private commercial schools, however, percentages of all kinds, varying from ten to fifty per cent, were fixed in the case of Jewish pupils. This provision had the effect that Jewish parents were vitally interested in securing the entrance of as many Christian children as possible in order to increase thereby the number of Jewish vacancies. Occasionally, a Jewish father, in the hope of creating a vacancy for his son, would induce a Christian to send his boy to a commercial school—though the latter, as a rule, offered little attraction for the Christian population—by undertaking to defray all expenses connected with his education. Yet many Jewish children, though enduring all these humiliations, found themselves outside the doors of the intermediate Russian schools.

It is worthy of note that in this attempt at the spiritual extermination of the Jewish children by barring them from intermediate educational institutions the Russian law followed strictly the ancient rule of the Pharaohs: "If it be a son, then ye shall kill him; but if it be a daughter, then she shall live." The Government schools for girls were opened to the Jewish population without any restriction, and the influx of Jewesses to these gymnazia was only checked unofficially by the anti-Semitic authorities of this or that institution, thereby turning the tide of applicants in the direction of private girls' schools. But as far as the higher schools were concerned, Jewish girls were subjected to the same restrictions as the boys. The Higher Courses for Women and the Pedagogic Courses in St. Petersburg restricted the admission of Jewesses to five per cent. The constitution of the Medical Institute for Women, founded in 1895, provided at first for the entire exclusion of Jewesses. But in 1897, the doors of

this institution were opened to the hated tribe—just enough to admit them to the extent of three per cent.

It was scarcely to be expected that the Jewish youths who had been locked out of the Russian school should entertain particularly friendly sentiments towards a régime which wasted their lives, humiliated their dignity, and sullied their souls. The Jewish lad, driven from the doors of the gymnazia, became an embittered "extern," who was forced to study at home and from year to year present himself for examination before the school authorities. An immense host of young men and women who found their way blocked to the higher educational institutions in Russia went abroad, flocking to foreign universities and higher professional schools, where they learned to estimate at its full value a régime which in their own country denied them the advantages granted to them outside of it. A large number of these college youths returned home permeated with revolutionary ideas—living witnesses to the sagacity of a Government which saw its reason for existence in the suppression of all revolutionary strivings.

6. ANTI-SEMITIC PROPAGANDA AND POGROMS

The reactionary Russian press, encouraged and stimulated by the official Jew-baiters, engaged in an increasingly ferocious campaign against the Jews. The Russian censorship, known all over for its merciless cruelty, which was throttling the printed word and trembling at the criminal thought of "inciting hatred toward the Government," yet granted untrammelled freedom to those who propagated hatred to Judaism, and thereby committed the equally criminal offence of "inciting one part of the population against the other." The *Novoye*

Vremya, the most wide-spread semi-official press organ, and its satellites in the provincial capitals were permitted to do what they pleased. They were free to slander the Jewish religion, the Jewish people, and the Jewish communities. When the famous Dreyfus affair had started in France, the *Novoye Vremya*, the oracle of Russia's ruling spheres, arrayed itself on the side of the Jew-baiters from among the French general staff, and launched a savage campaign of slander against the Jews of the entire globe. Many an article published in the anti-Semitic press was scarcely distinguishable from the proclamations calling upon the mob to massacre the Jews.

By far the most effective propaganda on behalf of pogroms was carried on, sometimes without a conscious realization of the consequences, by the Government itself: by persisting in its anti-Jewish policy. Observing this uninterrupted maltreatment of the Jews on the part of the Russian legislation and administration, which treated the Jews as if they were criminals, witnessing the expulsions inflicted upon the "illegally residing" Jews and the raids engineered against them, watching the constant mockery at the Jewish children who were driven from the doors of the educational institutions, and seeing the endless multitude of other humiliating disabilities, the unenlightened Russian populace necessarily gained the conviction that the extermination of Jewry was a noble and patriotic duty. Coupled with the usual economic and national conflicts, this trend of mind could not but lead to acts of violence.

At the end of the nineties the Russian horizon was darkened again by the ominous shadow of the beginning of the eighties: pogroms, at first sporadic and within circumscribed limits,

broke out again in various parts of the Pale. On February 18 and 19, 1897, an anti-Jewish riot took place in Shpola, a town in the government of Kiev. The following officially inspired account of the excesses, in which the facts were undoubtedly toned down, appeared in the *Novoye Vremya*:

At three o'clock in the afternoon an immense crowd of peasants rushed into our town, and wrecked completely the stores, homes, and warehouses belonging exclusively to the Jews. A large number of rich business places and small stores, as well as hundreds of houses, were demolished by the crowd, which acted, one might say, with elemental passion, dooming to destruction everything that fell into its hands. The town of Shpola, which is celebrated for its flourishing trade and its comparative prosperity, now presents the picture of a city which has been ravaged by a hostile army. Lines of old women and children may be seen moving [into the town] to carry home with them the property of the "Zhyds." Of essential importance is the fact that these disorders were undoubtedly prearranged. The local Jews knew of the impending disaster four days before it took place; they spoke about it to the local police chief, but the latter assured them that "nothing is going to happen."

Two months later, on April 16 and 17, the Christian inhabitants of the town of Kantakuzenka, in the government of Kherson, indulged in a similar "amusement" at the expense of the Jews. To quote the words of a semi-official report:

A cruel pogrom has taken place. Almost the entire town has been destroyed by an infuriated mob. All Jewish stores were wrecked and the goods found there were thrown about. A part of the merchandise was looted by the rabble. The synagogue alone remained unscathed.

Here, too, it was known beforehand that a pogrom was in the course of preparation. The Jews petitioned the authorities

to avert the catastrophe, but the local police force was found inadequate to cope with the situation.

In both devastated towns the governors of the respective provinces eventually appeared on the scene with detachments of troops, but in the meantime the revolting performances were over. Many rioters were placed under arrest and put on trial. More than sixty were sentenced by the courts to a term in prison from eight to fourteen months. One of the defendants, a Little-Russian peasant, who had been arrested for having taken part in an anti-Jewish riot, voiced his amazement in these characteristic words: "They told us we had permission to beat the Jews, and now it appears that it is all a lie."

A pogrom on a more comprehensive scale, arranged in honor of the Easter festival, and lasting for three days (April 19-21, 1899), was allowed to take place in the city of Nicholayev, the South-Russian port of entry. Bands of rioters, to the number of several thousand, among them many newly arrived Great-Russian day laborers, and a few "intellectual" ring-leaders, fell upon Jewish stores and residences and destroyed or looted their contents, complying faithfully with the established pogrom ritual, while the police and Cossack forces proved "powerless." On the third day, when the news of the freedom accorded to the rioters and robbers at Nicholayev reached the villages in the vicinity, a whole army of peasants, both men and women, numbering some ten thousand, started towards the city on their wagons, with the intention of carrying off the property of the Jews—but they were too late; for in the meantime Cossacks and soldiers had been ordered to stop the pogroms and disperse the rioters. The peasants were driven off and had to return to their villages on their

empty wagons. Exasperated by their failure, the peasants vented their fury upon the Jewish cemetery outside the city, demolishing a large number of tombstones, and then, scattering all over the district, made an attack upon the Jewish population in the neighboring settlements and villages. In the Jewish agricultural colony of Nagartava all farm-houses and stores were wrecked and looted, and the agricultural implements demolished. The Russian peasant was unscrupulously ruining and robbing his Jewish fellow-peasant. In the adjacent colonies, the Jews, being of a robust physique, were able to put up an effective defence.

The only protest against this new outbreak of barbarism was voiced by the "Son of the Fatherland" (*Syn Otyechestva*), a liberal Russian press organ:

When at last—questioned the paper—will that terrible relic of the gloomy era of the Middle Ages take an end? When will there be a stop to this breaking of windows, this beating of men and this wrecking of houses and stores?

This time the orders from St. Petersburg were explicit: the local authorities were commanded to prevent the further spread of the pogrom agitation. The reason for this unaccustomed attitude is not difficult to guess. Two weeks after the Nicholayev atrocities, the first International Hague Conference opened its sessions (May 6-18), having been called at the initiative of the Russian emperor to discuss the question of disarmament, and this Conference must have suggested to the Tzar the advisability of first disarming the anti-Jewish rioters in Russia itself. However, he failed to draw the more important conclusion from the Conference called by him: that it was necessary to stop, or at least to reduce, the constant arming of

his own Government against the Jews and to discard the mediæval weapons of oppression and persecution which spelled destruction to an entire nation. This alone is enough to expose the hollowness of the spectacle at the Hague, which had been designed by the feeble-minded Nicholas as a sort of diplomatic entertainment.

That the Russian authorities, when so minded, were fully capable of grappling with the pogrom agitation was demonstrated by the rapidity with which, on a later occasion, they suppressed the anti-Jewish excesses in the Polish city of Chenstokhov (August 19, 1902). In this hotbed of dismal Polish clericalism, the goal of thousands of Catholic pilgrims, who arrive there to worship the Holy Virgin on the "Bright Mountain," a street brawl between a Jewish tradesman and a Polish woman grew, owing to the instigations of Catholic priests, into a monstrous assault upon Jewish houses and stores by a crowd of fifteen thousand Poles. Here, too, the customary shouts were heard: "Beat the Jews! Nothing will happen to us." But the Chenstokhov rioters made a grievous error in their calculation. The protection of the Russian authorities did not extend to the Poles who were not considered politically "dependable," and were known to be equally hostile to the Zhyds and the "Moskals."¹ The excesses had started in the morning, and in the evening they were at an end, a volley from the soldiers having put the tremendous crowd to flight. When the case came up before the courts, the public prosecutor pleaded for the severe punishment of the culprits. The guilty Poles were sentenced to penal servitude and to terms

[¹ A contemptuous nickname for Russians customary among the Poles.]

in prison, and in some cases even damages were awarded to the Jewish victims—an extraordinarily rare occurrence in legal proceedings of this kind.

The union of Polish anti-Semitism with Russian Judaeophobia brought again to life the old monstrous accusation against the Jews—the ritual murder libel. A Polish servant girl in the employ of David Blondes, a Jewish barber in Vilna, steeped, as she was, in gross superstition and being a pliant tool in the hands of fanatical priests, ran out one night (March, 1900) into the street, shouting that her master had wounded her and had tried to squeeze blood from her for the Matzah. A crowd of Christians quickly assembled, and seeing the scratches on the neck and hands of the girl, fell upon Blondes and gave him a severe beating. The “criminal” was thrown into prison, and the prosecuting authorities, listening to the “voice of the people,” were zealous in their search for the threads of the crime. The anti-Semitic press launched a well-planned campaign against the Jews in the hope of influencing the judicial verdict. The lower court recognized the fact of the assault, but denied the presence of any murderous intent, and, leaving aside the possibility of a ritual motive, sentenced Blondes to imprisonment for four months. The counsel for the defence, the well-known lawyer Gruzenberg, and others, fearing lest this sentence might be construed by the enemies of Judaism as a corroboration of the ritual murder libel, appealed from the verdict of the court, and proved victorious: a decision handed down by the Senate ordered the case to be sent back for a second trial to the District Court of Vilna, and the court of jurymen, after listening to the statements of authoritative experts and the

brilliant speeches of the defence, rendered a verdict of not guilty (February 1, 1902). The prisoner was set at liberty, and the nightmare of the "ritual murder Dreyfusiad" was dispelled for the time being.

Even the Russian stage was made subservient to the purposes of Jew-baiting. A converted Jew by the name of Efron-Litvin, who had joined the anti-Semitic business firm of the *Novoye Vremya*, wrote a libelous play under the title "The Sons of Israel," or "The Smugglers," in which Jews and Judaism were made the subject of the most horrible calumnies. The play was first produced at St. Petersburg, in the theatre controlled by Suvorin, the publisher of the *Novoye Vremya*, and in the course of 1901-1902 it made the rounds of the provincial stage. Everywhere, the Russian Jew-haters welcomed this talentless production, which pictured the Jews as rogues and criminals, and represented the Jewish religion and morality as the fountain-head whence the supposed hatred of the Jews against the Christians derived its origin. Naturally enough the Jews and the best elements among the Russian *intelligenza* looked upon the mere staging of such a play as an incitement to pogroms. They appealed repeatedly to the police, calling upon them to stop the production of a play which was sure to fan national and religious hatred. The police, however, were not guided by the wishes of the Jews, but by those of their enemies. As a result, in a considerable number of cities where the play was presented, such as Smolensk, Oryol, Kishinev, Tiflis, and others, violent demonstrations took place in the theatres. The Jewish spectators and a part of the Russian public, particularly from among the college youth, hissed and hooted, demanding the removal from the

stage of this libel on a whole people. The anti-Semites, in turn, shouted: "Down with the Jews!", and started a fight with the demonstrators. The police, of course, sided with the anti-Semites, attacking the demonstrators and dragging them to the police stations. This agitation led to a number of legal proceedings against the Jews who were charged with disturbing the peace. During the trial of one of these cases (in the city of Oryol), the counsel for the defence used the following argument:

The play inflames the national passions, and makes the national traits of a people the object of ridicule and mockery,—of a people, moreover, which is denied equal rights and has no means of voicing its protest. The production of such a play should never have been permitted, the more so as the police were well acquainted with the agitated state of the public mind.

The argument of the defending attorney was scarcely convincing. For the article of the Russian law which forbids the "incitement of one part of the population against the other" loses its validity when the "other part" means the Jews.

CHAPTER XXXII

THE NATIONAL AWAKENING

1. THE RISE OF POLITICAL ZIONISM

For two decades the sledge hammer of Russian reaction had been descending with crushing force upon the vast community of the six million Russian Jews. Yet in the end it was found that the heavy hammer, to use the well-known simile of Pushkin, instead of shattering the national organism of Jewry, had only helped to steel it and to harden its indestructible spiritual self. The Jewry of Russia showed to the world that it was endowed with an iron constitution, and those that had hoped to crush it by the strokes of their hammer were ultimately forced to admit that they had produced the opposite result. At first it seemed as if the effect of these blows would be to turn Jewry into a shapeless mass. There were moments of despair and complete prostration, when the approaching darkness threatened to obliterate all paths. This stage was followed by a period of mental haziness, marked by dim yearnings for regeneration, which were bound to remain fruitless because unaccompanied by organizing energy.

This transitional state of affairs lasted throughout the eighties and during the first half of the nineties. But by and by, out of the chaos of these nebulous social tendencies, there emerged more and more clearly the outlines of definite politico-national doctrines and organizations, and new paths were blazed which, leading in different directions, converged toward one goal—that of the regeneration of the Jewish people from within, both in its national and social life.

The turning-point of this process is marked by the year 1897. That year, in which the first International Zionist Congress held its sessions, inaugurated not only the political Zionist movement, but also the development of other currents of Jewish national and political thought. The entire gamut of public slogans rang through the air, all bearing testimony to one and the same fact: that the era of national prostration had come to an end, and that the vague longings for liberation and regeneration had assumed the character of a conscious endeavor pursuing a well-defined course. The careful observer could scarcely fail to perceive that beneath the hammer of history the formless mass of Jewry was being forged into a well-shaped instrument of great power. The organization of the Jewish people had made its beginning.

Among the movements which arose at the end of the nineteenth century there were some which came to the surface of Jewish life rather noisily, attracting the attention of the Jewish masses as well as that of the outside world. Others, however, were imbedded more deeply in the consciousness of the educated classes and were productive of a new outlook upon the national Jewish problem. The former were an answer to the question of the "Jewish misery," of the *Judennot*, in its practical aspect. The latter offered a solution of the national-cultural problem of Judaism in its totality. The movements of the first kind are represented by Political Zionism and Territorialism. In the second category stand Spiritual Zionism and National-Cultural Autonomism. On a parallel line with both varieties of the national movement, and frequently intersecting it, went the Jewish socialistic movement, tinged to a lesser or larger degree by nationalistic tendencies.

For fifteen years, the "Lovers of Zion," or the *Hibbat Zion* movement, had been pursuing its course in Russia, without showing marked progress in the direction of that universal Jewish goal which had been formulated by its champions, Lilienblum and Pinsker.¹ During that period some fifteen Jewish agricultural colonies had sprung up in Palestine. The Jewish population of the Holy Land had been increased by some twenty thousand souls, and an effort had been made to create a national model school and to revive the ancient Hebrew tongue; but needless to say all this was far from solving the burning question of the six million Russian Jews who were clamoring for relief from their intolerable condition. At the slow rate of progress which had hitherto characterized the Jewish endeavors in Palestine any attempt to transfer a considerable portion of the Russian center to the Holy Land was doomed to failure, particularly in view of the hostility of the Turkish Government which was anxious to check even this insignificant growth of Jewish colonization.

At that juncture, the air of Europe resounded with the clarion tones of Theodor Herzl's appeal to the Jews to establish a "Jewish State." The appeal came from Western Europe, from the circles in which the sufferings of their "Eastern brethren" had hitherto been viewed entirely from the philanthropic point of view. It came from a young Viennese journalist who had been aroused by the orgy of anti-Semitism in the capital of Austria (the agitation of Burgomaster Lueger, and others), and by the exciting anti-Jewish scenes enacted in the capital of France, where, as a correspondent of the Viennese daily "*Die Neu Freie Presse*," he followed the Dreyfus affair

¹ See vol. II, p. 332.

in its first early stages. Herzl became suddenly conscious of the acute pain of the Jewish misery. He saw the anti-Semitism of Western Europe closing ranks with the Judaeophobia of Eastern Europe. He saw the ideal of assimilation crumbling to pieces, and he made up his mind to hoist the flag of Jewish nationalism, scarcely aware of the fact that it had already been hoisted in the East.¹ His pamphlet ("The Jewish State"), which appeared in the beginning of 1896, was in its fundamental premises a repetition of the old appeal of Pinsker. The author of the new publication was convinced, like his predecessor, that the only relief from the Jewish misery lay in the concentration of the Jewish people upon a separate territory, without determining the question whether that territory should be Palestine or Argentina. But, in contradistinction to Pinsker, Herzl was not satisfied with formulating the problem theoretically; he offered at the same time a plan of political and economic organization by means of which the problem was to be solved: the creation of special representative bodies which were to enter into negotiations with rulers and Governments concerning the cession of an appropriate territory to the Jews under an international protectorate, and were also to obtain huge funds to carry out the transplantation and resettlement of vast Jewish masses. Representing a combination of theoretic enthusiasm and practical Utopias, the "Jewish State" of Herzl revived the nearly smothered political hopes which had been cherished by the *Hovebe Zion* circles in Russia. The Russian Jews, groaning under the yoke of an Egyptian bondage,

¹ After the publication of his *Judenstaat*, Herzl openly confessed that at the time of writing he did not know of the existence of Pinsker's "Autoemancipation."

flocked to the new Moses who announced the glad tidings of the Exodus, and Herzl, beholding the ready hosts in the shape of the *Hovebe Zion* societies, was quick to adjust his territorialistic scheme to the existing Palestinian movement.

In this wise, the organization of political Zionism sprang into life, using as its medium of expression the international party congresses, most of which convened in Switzerland, in the city of Basle. The first Basle Congress held in August, 1897, was an impressive demonstration of the national awakening of the Jewish people. For the first time, the united representatives of Eastern and Western Jewry proclaimed before the world that the scattered sections of Jewry looked upon themselves as one national organism striving for national regeneration. From the center of Western assimilation, advocating the disappearance of Jewry, came the war-cry, proclaiming the continued existence of the Jewish nation, though that existence was conditioned by the establishment of a separate "publicly and legally assured" territorial center. Of the four articles of the "Basle program," which were adopted by the first Congress, three deal with the fundamental task of the party, the political and financial endeavors looking to the colonization of large Jewish masses in Palestine, and only one voices the need "of strengthening the Jewish national feeling and self-respect."

In the further progress of the Zionist organization, these two principles, the political and the cultural, were constantly struggling for mastery, the Zionists of the West gravitating toward political activities and diplomatic negotiations, while the Zionists of the East laid greater emphasis upon internal cultural work along national lines, looking upon it as an

indispensable prerequisite for national rebirth. The struggle between these two principles continued at each succeeding annual Congress (at the second and third held in Basle in 1898 and 1899, at the fourth in London in 1900, and at the fifth in Basle in 1901). On the one hand, the Zionists were feverishly engaged in the external organization of the movement: the consolidation of the Shekel-payer societies, the creation of the Jewish Colonial Trust and the Jewish National Fund, the conduct of diplomatic negotiations with the Turkish Government and with the political representatives of other countries for the purpose of obtaining a guaranteed "charter" for a wholesale colonization in Palestine. On the other hand, endeavors were made to nationalize the Jewish intellectual classes, to promote the Hebrew language, to create a national school, and "to conquer the communities" for Zionism, that is, to strengthen the influence of the party in the administration of the Jewish communities. The Convention of Russian Zionists, held at Minsk in 1902, paid particular attention to the cultural aspirations of the party, and adopted a resolution calling for the appointment of two committees, an orthodox and a progressive, to find ways and means for placing Jewish education on a national basis. The same Convention demonstrated the growth of the movement, for, during the first five years of its existence, the Zionist organization in Russia had succeeded in securing about seventy thousand Shekel-payers who were organized in approximately five hundred societies.

Yet the political and financial achievements of Zionism during that period of bloom—prior to the crisis of 1903—were insignificant. The diplomatic negotiations of the Zionist

leader, Dr. Theodor Herzl, with the Sultan of Turkey and his Government, as well as with the German emperor and several other European sovereigns, failed of their purpose—the obtaining of a Turkish charter for the wholesale colonization of Palestine. The financial instrument of the party, the Jewish Colonial Trust, proved as yet too weak to collect the proposed fund of ten million dollars—a modest sum when compared with the purpose for which it was destined. The colonization of Palestine proceeded at a slow pace, and its miniature scale was entirely out of proportion to the grand plan of establishing a national autonomous center in Palestine. Withal, Zionism proved during that brief interval a potent factor in the national awakening of Jewry. The strength of the movement lay, not in the political aims of the organization, which were mostly beyond reach, but in the very fact that tens of thousands of Jews were organized with a national end in view. It lay, moreover, in the current national-cultural activities, in the *Gegenwartsarbeit*, which, yielding to necessity, had been raised from a means to an end. In Western Europe, the principal significance of Zionism lay in its effect as a counterbalance to assimilation, Herzl having declared that “Zionism aims at the establishment of a publicly and legally assured home for those Jews who, in their present places of residence, are not able, or not willing, to assimilate themselves.” In Russia, however, where Jewish life was dominated by more powerful nationalizing influences, the chief importance of political Zionism lay in this very propaganda of a national rebirth in the midst of those whom militant Judaeophobia was endeavoring to reduce by intolerable oppression to the level of moral degenerates. The apathy and faint-heartedness which had charac-

terized public Jewish life during the eighties and the first half of the nineties was followed by a period of noisy bustle, of organizing activity, and of great animation. The Pale of Settlement resounded with the din of its hundreds of Zionist societies, with the speeches of Zionist agitators at public meetings and in the synagogues, with the intense agitation preceding the elections for each Zionist congress, with the heated debates about the program between the political and the cultural Zionists, between the Mizrahists (the faction of orthodox Zionists) and the Progressives. The public utterances of the Zionist leaders, Herzl and Nordau, were the subject of interminable discussion and comment. The Russian Jews were particularly stirred by the annual Congress addresses of Nordau on the "General Situation in Jewry," in which the famous writer pictured with characteristic vividness the tragedy of the *Golus*, the boundless extent of Jewish misery, having a material aspect in the lands of oppression and a moral aspect among the emancipated sections of Jewry, and which culminated in the thought that Jewry could not exist without Zion.

Nordau's motto, "Jewry will be Zionistic, or it will not be," was differently interpreted in the different circles of the Russian Jewish *intelligenza*. Among the Russian leaders of the party only a minority (Dr. Mandelstamm of Kiev, and others) were fully in accord with the extreme political views of the Western leaders. The majority of the former workers in the ranks of the *Hovebe Zion* movement (Ussishkin, Chlenov, and others) sought to harmonize the political functions of Zionism with its cultural aspirations and combine the diplomatic negotiations concerning a charter with the up-keep of the existing colonization work in Palestine, which latter was contemptuously

branded by the hide-bound adherents of political Zionism as "infiltration." This Babel of opinions within the ranks of the organization could not fail to weaken its effectiveness as an agency for the attainment of the ultimate Zionist goal. At the same time, it brought life and animation into the movement. The crack of the whip of the Egyptian taskmasters remained unheard amidst the clash of ideas and the proud slogans of national liberation which resounded throughout the Jewish Pale.

2. SPIRITUAL ZIONISM, OR AHAD-HA'AMISM

And yet, political Zionism viewed as a theory failed to offer a satisfactory solution of the great Jewish problem in all its historic complexity. Born of the reaction against anti-Semitism, and endeavoring to soothe the pain of the wounded Jewish heart, it was marked by all the merits and demerits of a theory which was substantially Messianic in character and was entirely dependent on subjective forces, on faith and will-power. "If you only will it, then it is no fairy tale"¹—in these words the ultimate goal of political Zionism is indicated by its founder, who firmly believed that an extraordinary exertion of the national will would transform the fairy tale of a "Jewish state" into reality. When confronted with the question as to the future of the Jewish nation in case faith and will-power should prove unable to grapple with the conditions over which it had no control, and the "fairy tale" of a united political autonomous center should not be realized, political Zionism either remained silent or indulged in a polemical retort which was

[¹ The motto prefixed to Herzl's Zionistic novel *Altneuland*.]

in flagrant contradiction to Jewish history: "Without Zion, Judaism is bound to perish." The national conscience, however, could not be reconciled to such an answer. A more or less satisfactory solution of the problem of Judaism could not spring from the external reaction against anti-Semitism, but could only mature as the fruit of profound contemplation of the course of development pursued by the Jewish people in the Diaspora; such a solution could only be found in the endeavor to adapt the new national movement to this historic course. From this point of view political Zionism was rectified by "Spiritual Zionism," the teaching of the publicist and philosopher Ahad Ha'am (U. Ginzberg).

Even before political Zionism, or "Herzlianism," appeared on the scene, Ahad Ha'am had succeeded in substantially modifying the Palestinian idea as formulated by Lilienblum and Pinsker. In the program of the semi-Masonic order *Bnei Moshe* ("Sons of Moses"), established by him in Odessa,¹ he laid down the fundamental principle that the preparation of the land for the people must be preceded by the transformation of the people into a firmly-knit national organization: "We must propagate the national idea, and convert it into a lofty moral ideal." Having become associated with the Palestinian colonization in a practical manner, as a leading member of the Odessa Palestine Society, founded in 1890,² Ahad Ha'am indefatigably preached that the significance of this microscopic colonization was not to be sought in its economic results, but in its spiritual and cultural effects, in establishing upon the historic soil of Judaism a nursing-ground for a pure national

¹ It was founded in 1889 and disbanded in 1897.

[² See vol. II, p. 421 *et seq.*]

culture which should be free from foreign admixture, and from the inevitable cultural eclecticism of the Diaspora. After the spectacular appearance of political Zionism on the Jewish stage this fundamental idea of "Neo-Palestinianism" was more fully elaborated by Ahad Ha'am, assuming the shape of a comprehensive doctrine, known as the doctrine of "Spiritual Zionism." When the first Basle Congress was over, Ahad Ha'am declared that the "Jewish State," as formulated by Herzl, was beyond realization, for the reason that, under the prevailing circumstances, it was entirely impossible to transfer to Palestine the whole Diaspora, or even a substantial part of it. Consequently, the Palestinian colonization could not put an end to the material "Jewish misery," whereas a small Jewish center, gradually rising in Palestine, might, with the help of a proper organization, solve the national-spiritual problem of Judaism. The formation of a spiritual center in the historic homeland of the nation, the creation in that center of a Jewish national school, the revival of the Hebrew language as a medium of daily speech, the untrammelled development of a Jewish culture, without the pressure of a foreign environment—such in short he held to be the true goal of the Palestine idea. A "publicly and legally assured home for the Jewish spirit" of this kind would exert an uninterrupted nationalizing influence upon the Diaspora, serving as a living center of attraction for a genuine Jewish culture, and acting like a focus which scatters its rays over a large periphery.

The Zionist doctrine of Ahad Ha'am, as a counterbalance to official Zionism which was hall-marked by the "Basle Program," led to interminable discussions among the partisans of the movement. It did not succeed in creating a separate party

or a special public agency for its realization; yet the elements of that doctrine have mingled in a larger or lesser degree with the views of the political Zionists in Russia, and manifested themselves in the protests of the cultural Zionists against the extreme political advocates of the movement at the Zionist Congresses. The Zionist Convention at Minsk, referred to previously, resulted in a partial triumph for the ideas championed by Ahad Ha'am, who submitted a report on the "Spiritual Regeneration of Judaism."¹ The Convention adopted a resolution calling for a larger measure of cultural work in the schedule of the party activities, but rejected at the same time the proposal of the referee to create a Jewish world organization for the revival of Jewish culture, on the ground that such an organization might destroy the political equilibrium of Zionism.

3. SPIRITUAL NATIONALISM, OR NATIONAL-CULTURAL AUTONOMISM

Both political and spiritual Zionism have their roots in the same common ground, in "the negation of the *Golus*": in the conviction that outside of Palestine—in the lands of the Diaspora—the Jewish people has no possibility of continuing its existence as a normal national entity. Both political and spiritual Zionists have their eyes equally fixed upon Zion as the anchor of safety for Judaism, whether it be in its material

[¹ Ahad Ha'am's report is embodied in the second volume of his collected essays (Berlin, 1903) under the title *Tehiyyat ha-Ru'ah*, "The Spiritual Revival." An English version of this article is found in Leon Simon's translation of Ahad Ha'am's essays (Jewish Publication Society of America, Philadelphia, 1912), p. 253 *et seq.*]

or in its spiritual aspect. Neither doctrine had formulated a clear idea of the future destinies of the Jewish Diaspora, that is, of the destinies of the entire Jewry of the world, minus the section settled in Palestine. The political Zionists evaded the question as to the fate of the Jewish people in case their aspirations should not materialize, and, faithful to the motto proclaimed by Nordau, were ready, as it were, to sentence the entire Diaspora to death, or to a life worse than death, in the eventuality of the Palestine charter being refused. The cultural Zionists protested against this hypothetical Zionism, insisting that the Diaspora would preserve its national vitality by mere contact with a small cultural center in Palestine. But how the tremendous bulk of the Diaspora Jewry should be organized for a Jewish life on the spot, how it should be enabled to liberate itself from the political and cultural pressure of the environment—that question remained unanswered by both wings of Zionism. An answer to this question could not be found by considering merely the last stage of Jewish history, but by viewing the latter in all its phases, beginning with the ancient Greco-Roman and Eastern Diaspora. Such an answer, based upon the entire Jewish past, was attempted by the doctrine of "Spiritual Nationalism," or, more correctly, "National-Cultural Autonomism." Its fundamental principles have been formulated by the present writer in his "Letters Concerning Ancient and Modern Judaism."¹

[¹A number of articles under that title appeared originally in the Russian-Jewish monthly *Voskhod*. They were subsequently enlarged and published in book form in 1907. The first two "Letters" were rendered into German by the translator of this volume and published in 1905 by the *Jüdischer Verlag* in Berlin, under the title *Die Grundlagen des Nationaljudentums*.]

The theory of Autonomism takes as its point of departure the historic fact that at all times, with the exception of a few brief and partial deflections, the Jewish Diaspora, taken as a whole, represented a national organism, in which the absence of political or territorial unity was made up by the stronger cohesion of its spiritual and cultural ties and the greater intensity of its social and autonomous life. For many centuries the entire culture of Judaism assumed a religious coloring and its communal autonomy was centered in the synagogue—which circumstance gave the modern champions of assimilation reason for thinking that the Jews were only a religious group scattered among various nations. It was a fatal error on the part of the Parisian Synhedrion convoked by Napoleon when, in its declaration of 1807, it proclaimed that "Jewry to-day does not constitute a nation," an error which during the nineteenth century became an article of faith with the Jews of Western Europe. The latest development of the national movement has shown that Jewry, though scattered among various political states, is a nation full of vitality, and that the Jewish religion is only one of its functions. The Jewish national idea, secularized to a certain degree, is based on the assumption that all sections of the Jewish people, though divided in their political allegiance, form one spiritual or historico-cultural nation, which, like all national minority groups in countries with a mixed population, are in duty bound to fight in their several lands at one and the same time not only for their civil equality, but also for their national rights—the autonomy of the Jewish community, school, and language. What Jewish orthodoxy has for centuries stood for and still stands for, under the guise of religious

Judaism, progressive Jews should fight for under the banner of a national Jewish culture. The fate of universal Jewry ought not to be bound up with one single center. We should take into account the historic fact of a multiplicity of centers of which those that have the largest numbers and can boast of the most genuine development of a national Jewish life are entitled to the hegemony of the Jewish people. In those lands in which civil emancipation has been achieved the fight must go on for national emancipation, the recognition of the Jews as a nation which is entitled to a comprehensive communal and cultural autonomy. In Russia, the struggle must be carried on simultaneously for civil as well as national rights. Temporary set-backs in this struggle for a national existence ought not to discourage a nation which has endured the most terrible sufferings for centuries and has been able to preserve its spiritual freedom even in the midst of slavery.

A certain measure of relief from these sufferings might be found in the old-time remedy of Jewish history, in the emigration from the lands of bondage to countries enjoying a greater amount of freedom. If in one of the centers the Jews are subject to prolonged persecution, then their gradual transplantation, be it partial or complete, to another center offering more favorable opportunities in the struggle for existence ought to be attempted. Thus, during the last decades, the partial exodus of the Jews from Russia has helped to create an important Jewish center in North America and a smaller, yet spiritually valuable center, in Palestine. The latter may become a medium for the nationalization of the entire Diaspora, but only then when the Diaspora itself will be organized *directly* upon the foundations of a cultural autonomy. Zion-

ism, when reduced to its concrete possibilities, can form only one plank in the universal platform of the Jewish nation. The Palestinian center may strengthen the national development of the Diaspora, but it does not constitute a *conditio sine qua non* for its autonomous existence.

Similar to Spiritual Zionism which had not succeeded in forming a special party, and yet acted as a lever in the general Zionist movement, Autonomism, too, failed to find its embodiment in a party organization, and yet became an integral part of the politico-national movements of Russian Jewry at the beginning of the present century. During the revolutionary struggle in Russia, in 1905 and 1906, the demand for a national-cultural autonomy was embodied in various degrees by nearly all Jewish parties and groups in their platforms, aside from, and in addition to, the demand for civil equality.

4. THE JEWISH SOCIALISTIC MOVEMENT

On a parallel line with the nationalistic ideology, which formed a counterbalance to the assimilationist theory of Western Europe, the doctrine of Socialism came gradually to the fore, emphasizing the principle of the class struggle in a more or less intimate connection with the national idea. The Jewish labor movement was born at the end of the eighties in Lithuania—in Vilna, and other cities; its adherents were recruited from among the Jewish workingmen who were mainly engaged in handicrafts. In the nineties, the movement spread to the growing manufacturing centers of Lithuania and Poland—Bialystok, Smorgon, Warsaw, and Lodz. At first, the labor societies were established with a purely economic end in view—

¹ See later, p. 108 *et seq.*

the organization of strikes for fewer working hours, increased wages, and the like. The leaders of these societies who were recruited from among the young Jewish *intelligenzia*, some of whom had received a university education abroad, endeavored to model the movement upon the pattern of the West-European Social-Democracy. The doctrine of Marxian Socialism was applied, sometimes rather hastily, to the primitive stage of capitalistic production in the Pale of Settlement where it was still very difficult to draw a line of demarcation between the poverty-stricken "petty bourgeoisie," forming the bulk of the Jewish population, and the labor proletariat.

In the second half of the nineties, the Jewish Socialistic societies were drawn into the maelstrom of the Russian revolutionary movement. In 1897, all these societies were consolidated in the "League of the Jewish Workingmen of Lithuania, Poland, and Russia," known under its abbreviated name as *Der Bund* ("The League"). The first secret convention of the "League" took place in Vilna in the month of September, just one month after the first Zionist Congress at Basle. Various party centers were organized in Russia—clandestinely, of course; the party organ, published in the language of the Jewish masses, in Yiddish, appeared abroad under the name of *Die Arbeiter Stimme*. It is worthy of note that the formation of the Jewish "Bund" gave a year later the stimulus to the organization of the "Russian Social-Democratic Party," which united the formerly existing Russian labor societies. The "Bund" now joined the ranks of Russian Social Democracy as a separate autonomous group, although a number of Jewish Social Democrats who had adopted the

viewpoint of assimilation or cosmopolitanism occupied a conspicuous place in the leadership of the Russian party at large.

At subsequent conventions the "Bund" endeavored to formulate its national program. At first, the tendency prevailed to limit the national element in the party platform to the use of the popular Jewish vernacular as a propaganda medium among the masses. At the third convention of the "Bund," which took place in Kovno in 1899, the proposal to demand national equality for the Jews was voted down on the ground that the attention of the workingmen should be concentrated upon their class interests and ought not to be diverted in the direction of national aspirations. The fourth convention of the party, held in 1901, similarly declared "that it was premature, under the present circumstances, to put forward the demand for a national autonomy for the Jews," although it realized at the same time that "the concept of nationality is also applicable to the Jewish people." Only after prolonged debates in the party press, and after a violent struggle with the centralizing tendencies of the Russian Social-Democratic Party, the convention of the "Bund," held in 1905, adopted a resolution, demanding "national-cultural autonomy" in the domain of popular education as well as public rights for the language spoken by the Jews.

In this wise, the national element gradually permeated even the doctrine of Socialism which, in its essence, had always been opposed to it and had placed in its stead the principle of internationalism and class interests. On the other hand, an attempt was made to inject the Socialistic element into Zionism. Beginning with 1901, the *Poale-Zion* ("The Zionist Workingmen") began to organize themselves in separate

societies which proclaimed the territorial principle of Zionism as the only means of solving the Jewish social-economic question, proceeding from the assumption that in the lands of the Diaspora the Jewish masses would always be barred from the domain of big industry.

5. THE REVIVAL OF JEWISH LETTERS

This national revival of Russian Jewry found its expression also in Jewish literature. The periodical press, particularly in the Hebrew language, exhibited new life and vigor, and in other domains of literary productivity various big talents made their appearance. As early as the end of the eighties, the two weekly Hebrew organs, the *ha-Melitz* in St Petersburg, and the *ha-Tzefirah* in Warsaw, were transformed into dailies. The Hebrew annuals pursuing purely literary and scientific aims, such as the *ha-Asif* ("The Harvest"), *Keneset Israel* ("The Community of Israel"), *Pardes* ("The Garden"), and others, made way for the more energetic *ha-Shiloah*, a monthly publication which reacted more rapidly on the questions of the day.¹ This review, which is the equal of the leading periodicals of Europe, exercised considerable influence upon the views of the nationalist Jewish youth during the period of transition from the nineteenth to the twentieth century.

At one and the same time, considerable headway was made by the periodical press in the popular vernacular, called Jargon, or Yiddish. The *Jüdisches Volksblatt*, a weekly publica-

¹ The *ha-Shiloah* was edited from 1896 to 1902 by Ahad Ha'am in Odessa, though it was published in Berlin. Beginning with 1903, it was edited by Dr. Joseph Klausner, also in Odessa.

tion, appeared in St. Petersburg from 1881 to 1890. The *Hausfreund*, the *Jüdische Volksbibliothek*, the *Jüdische Bibliothek*, edited by Spektor, Shalom Aleichem, and I. L. Perez, respectively, were published in Warsaw and Kiev between 1888 and 1895. *Der Jud*, a Yiddish weekly, was issued in Warsaw in 1899-1902.

As for the Jewish press in the Russian language, the former mouthpiece of the progressive *intelligenzia*, the *Voskhod*, which appeared at the same time as a weekly and as a monthly publication, leaned more and more towards the national movement. Another Russian-Jewish weekly, *Budushchnost*, "The Future," which appeared in St. Petersburg from 1899 to 1903, was Zionistic in tendency.

In the theoretic branch of publicistic literature the dominant figure during that period was Ahad Ha'am, whose articles endeavored to answer not only the exciting questions of the day, but also the perpetual problems of Judaism. His brief semi-philosophic, semi-publicistic essays, under the general heading *Perurim* ("Titbits"), served as a lode star for those who hoped to find the synthesis of "Jew" and "man" in modern Jewish nationalism. In a series of articles he lashes "slavery in freedom,"¹ or the assimilation of the emancipated Jews of Western Europe; he criticizes the theory of "Nationalism without Zion," and the manifestations of a Jewish Nietzscheanism with its denial of the Jewish ethical doctrine. Not satisfied with mere criticism, he formulates in these articles the principles of a "spiritual revival"² in the sense of a

[¹ *'Abdut be-tok Herut*, the title of one of these articles.]

[² *Tehiyyat ha-Ru'ah*, the title of another article, based upon his report at the Zionist Convention at Minsk. See above, p. 51.]

nationalization of Jewish culture. The essays of Ahad Ha'am, which were subsequently collected under the title '*Al Parashat Derakim*, "At the Parting of the Ways,"'¹ represent a profound and closely reasoned system of thought which is firmly grounded in historico-philosophical premises.

In the forefront of publicists of a less theoretic turn of mind stood the talented Nahum Sokolow, the editor of the *ha-Tsefirah* in Warsaw, who, after some vacillation, joined the ranks of political Zionism. In the border-land between journalism and literary criticism the most conspicuous figures were David Frischman and Micah Joseph Berdychevsky. The former emphasized in his brilliant literary essays the necessity of a "Europeanization" of Judaism, while the latter championed the cause of Nietzscheanism, protesting against the suppression of the "man" in the "Jew," and against the predominance of the spiritual over the material in the doctrine of Judaism. Berdychevsky is also the author of a number of sketches portraying the tragic split in the soul of the Jewish intellectual and the primitive harmoniousness of the old hasidic world.

In the realm of Jewish *belles lettres* S. J. Abramovich, known under his pen-name *Mendele Mokher Sforim*, the writer of the "Era of Reforms," remained as theretofore the acknowledged leader. The creative energy of this author, who mastered with equal skill both the national and the popular language,

¹ The first three volumes appeared in 1895-1904. [The fourth volume appeared in 1913. A German rendering of Ahad Ha'am's selected essays by the translator of the present volume was published in Berlin in 1904; a second enlarged edition appeared in 1913. An English translation by Leon Simon was issued by the Jewish Publication Society of America in 1912.]

attained to even greater heights during the period of the new Jewish martyrdom. His novel *Wünschfingerl*, "The Wishing Ring," which was originally written in Yiddish, and, in its Hebrew version, grew into a large volume, *Be-'Emek ha-Bakha*, "In the Valley of Tears," (1897-1907), constitutes a great epic depicting Jewish life during the gloomy reign of Nicholas I. and the "Era of Enlightenment" under Alexander II. A series of sketches, marked by inimitable humor, portray the disintegration of the old mode of life under the influence of the pogroms of 1881 and the subsequent emigration from Russia (*Bime ha-Ra'ash*, "In Stormy Days," and others). His autobiographical series (*Bayyamim Hahem*, "In Those Days") and his incomplete *Shloime Reb Hayyim* ("Solomon the son of Hayyim") reveal the power of rare psychological analysis.

Abramovich's literary activity, extending over half a century,¹ earned for him the title of "Grandfather of Neo-Hebrew Literature" (*Der Zeide*).² He was privileged to witness the brilliant successes of his "sons and grandsons" who came gradually to the fore, particularly in Yiddish literature. His younger contemporary, Isaac Leib Perez, wrote, during the first period of his literary endeavors, clever stories, portraying the life of the Jewish masses in Poland and distinguished by a powerful realism, often tinged with satire (his series *Reisebilder*, "Travel Pictures," and other sketches which were written mostly during the nineties). Later on, Perez leaned more and more towards modern literary symbolism, drawing

[¹ He died, after the completion of the present volume by the author, on December 15, 1917.]

[² The Yiddish equivalent for "Grandfather."]

his inspiration mostly from the mystic legends of the Hasidim (his series *Hasidish*, which was subsequently expanded into two volumes under the title *Volkstümliche Geschichten*, "Popular Stories," 1909).¹

Towards the end of the century, the talent of the great Jewish humorist Shalom Aleichem (S. Rabinovitz)² attained its full bloom. He was particularly successful in his masterly delineation of the *Luftmensch* type of the Pale of Settlement, who is constantly on the hunt for a piece of bread, who clutches at every possible profession and subsists on illusions (his sketches *Menahem Mendel*). Using the popular vernacular with its characteristic idioms and witticisms as his vehicle of expression, Shalom Aleichem draws the pictures of the "Little People" of the Russian ghetto (his series *Kleine Menshelekh*), describes the joys and sorrows of their children (*Maassios far Jüdishe Kinder*, "Stories for Jewish Children"), and puts into the mouth of the unsophisticated philosopher of the ghetto, "Tevye (Tobias) the Dairyman," the soul-stirring epic of the great upheavals in this secluded little world (the series of sketches under the name *Tevye Der Milchiger*). To these big stars on the sky of Jewish *belles-lettres* may be added the host of lesser luminaries who write in the rejuvenated ancient language of the nation or in the vernacular of the masses, the Yiddish.

The literary revival manifested itself with particular vigor in the domain of poetry. At the beginning of the nineties, the

[¹ A collection of his sketches, translated into English by Helena Frank, was issued by the Jewish Publication Society of America in 1906.]

[² Died in New York on May 13, 1916.]

voice of Judah Leib Gordon, the poet of the "Era of Reforms" was silenced (he died in 1892). The singer of the national sorrow, Simon Frug,² who was carried away by the new ideas of Zionism, began to sing his "Zionids" in the Russian language, writing at the same time for the masses sonorous poems in Yiddish, though neither of them reveals the poetic charm of his older national elegies.

New stars now glisten on the horizon. The middle of the nineties saw the ripening of the mighty talent of Hayyim Nahman Bialik, who brought the poetical forms of ancient Hebrew speech to unprecedented perfection. The magnificence of form is matched by the wealth of content. The greatest creative power of Bialik is displayed in his treatment of national *motifs*. Himself the product of the rabbinical Yeshibah and Bet ha-Midrash, he sings of the spiritual beauty hidden behind these ancient and outwardly unattractive walls, in this antiquated citadel of the Jewish spirit, where the cult of intellectual knighthood reigned supreme, where the spiritual shield was forged which preserved a nation of lambs amidst a horde of wolves (his wonderful poems *Im Yesh Et Nafsheka la-Da'at*,³ *ha-Matmid*, "the Diligent Student," and others). The sufferings and humiliations heaped upon his people by its enemies bring the poet to the brink of despair, for he realizes that the old shield has been laid aside, and no new shield has taken its place. He is filled with indignation at the indifference of the Jewish masses to the appeal for

[¹ See vol II, p. 228 *et seq.*]

[² See vol. II, p. 330, n. 1.]

[³ "If thou wishes to know the fountain—whence thy martyred brethren drew their inspiration."]

regeneration sounded by Zionism (*Aken Hatzir ha-'Am*, "Verily, the People are like Grass," and others). At a later stage, beginning with the Kishinev pogrom of 1903, Bialik's lyre becomes more and more pessimistic, adopting the tone of wrathful rebuke and fiery denunciation.

In contra-distinction to this singer of the national soul, another contemporary poet, Saul Chernikhovsky, sounds the keynote of general human experience and the joy of living. He demonstratively prostrates himself before the statue of Apollo (*Lenokah Pesel Apollo*, "Before the Statue of Apollo"), offering to it the repentant prayer of the Jew for having denied the ideal of beauty. He raves about "Hellenism," the cult of joy and light, repudiating the one-sided spirituality and rigorism of old Judaism. Erotic *motifs*, descriptions of nature, ballads, rustic idylls—such are the characteristic features of Chernikhovsky's poetry which forms, as it were, a general human *pendant* to the poetry of Bialik, though yielding to it in the depth of literary conception. Both Bialik and Chernikhovsky fructified the field of Jewish poetry, which in the beginning of the twentieth century found a whole host of more or less talented cultivators, most of them writing in the ancient national language, though in a rejuvenated form.

Less rapid was the progress of Jewish scholarly endeavors. Yet, beginning with the eighties, even this domain is marked by an uninterrupted activity which forms a continuation of the scientific achievements of the West. The nineties inaugurate systematic efforts directed toward the elucidation of the history of the Jews in Russia and Poland. A series of scholarly researches, monographs, and general accounts of Jew-

ish history, written mostly in Russian, make their appearance. Particularly noteworthy are the efforts to blaze new paths of Jewish historiography converging towards the national conception of Judaism. The Jewish historians of the nineteenth century in Western Europe, who were swayed by assimilationist ideas, viewed Jewish history primarily from the theological or spiritualistic point of view. The scholarly endeavors of Russian Jewry constitute an attempt to understand the social development of the Diaspora as a peculiar, internally-autonomous nation which, at all times, has sought to preserve not only its religious treasures, but also the genuine complexion of its diversified national life.

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE KISHINEV MASSACRE

1. POGROMS AS A COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY MEASURE

The frenzy of political reaction, which raged for two decades, was grist to the mill of the Revolution. Stunned by the blow it had received at the beginning of the eighties, the Russian revolutionary movement came back to consciousness at the beginning of the twentieth century, when the hopes for a change of policy on the part of Nicholas II. had been completely blasted. The agitation among the students and the workingmen, the "disorders" at the universities, the strikes at the factories, the revolutionary propaganda carried on in the underground press at home and in the public press abroad—all these endeavors were gradually co-ordinated within the frame of the two revolutionary organizations, the Social-Democratic and the Social-Revolutionary parties, both of which assumed definite shape between 1898 and 1900. The Social-Revolutionary party favored terrorism as a weapon in its struggle with the Russian Government, which had made use of all the appliances of police terrorism to suppress the faintest stirring for liberty. This official terrorism raged with unrestricted violence. Nocturnal raids, arrests, prisons, and places of deportation or of penal servitude, filled to overflowing with "political criminals," mostly young men and women—such were the agencies by means of which the Government hoped to stamp out the "revolutionary hydra," even when manifesting itself in the form of moderate constitutional demands. The revolutionaries fought terrorism with terrorism, and one of their victims was the reactionary Minister of the Interior, Sipyaghin, who was

assassinated in April, 1902. The exasperated Tzar retorted by appointing to the same office von Plehve, one of the most experienced henchmen of the Russian political inquisition, who had long before, in his capacity of Chief of the Political Police, brought its mechanism to the top notch of efficiency.¹ He was destined to play an ill-fated rôle in the martyrology of Russian Jewry.

It was easily to be foreseen that the Russian revolutionary movement would make a strong appeal to the Russian Jewish youth. Had any other cultured nation been tormented and humiliated as cruelly and as systematically as were the Jews in Russia it would surely have given birth to an immense host of desperate terrorists. True, the Jews supplied the revolutionary army with a larger number of fighters than was warranted by their numerical proportion to the rest of the Russian population. Yet their number was insignificant when compared with the atrocities which were constantly perpetrated against them. As a rule, the Jewish college youth joined the ranks of the Social-Democratic organization, which disapproved of political assassination. There were particularly numerous Marxists among the Jewish young men and women who had been turned away from the Russian institutions of learning and had gone to Western Europe where they imbibed the doctrines and methods of German Social Democracy. There were fewer Jews among the Social Revolutionaries (Gershuni, Gotz, and others), and these, too, did not as a rule take a direct part in the terroristic plots. As a matter of fact, the only terrorist act committed by a Jew was that of the workingman Hirsh Lekkert, in Vilna. Stung by the

[¹ See vol. II, p. 381.]

barbarous conduct of the governor of Vilna, von Wahl, who had given orders to flog the Jewish workingmen in public for having arranged a demonstration on May 1, 1902, Lekkert fired upon that official. The governor escaped unscathed, and Lekkert paid with his life for the attempt. But on the whole, the revolutionary activity of the Jews was limited to the frequent political demonstrations arranged by the "Bund," and to the organizing endeavors of a certain section of the Jewish intellectuals who had joined the ranks of both Russian Socialistic parties.

Had the Russian Government been guided by a genuine interest in the body politic, the spread of the revolutionary movement among the Jews, which was the child of its own system of oppression, would have inevitably induced it to mitigate a system which was bound to turn millions of people into desperadoes. But the Russian Government was, properly speaking, not a Government. It was a caste of officials who had degraded the administration of the country to the systematic endeavor of saving their own personal careers and class interests, both of which were indissolubly bound up with unlimited autocracy. The Russian bureaucracy regarded the revolution as a personal threat, as a menace to its existence, and looked upon the Jewish participants in the revolution as their own individual enemies whose deeds were to be avenged upon the whole Jewish people. Thus there ripened in the mind of Plehve, the head of the bureaucratic inquisition, a truly devilish plan: to wage war against the Russian revolution by waging war against the Jews, and to divert the attention of the Russian public, which was honeycombed with the revolutionary propaganda, in the direction of the "aliens,"

thereby stigmatizing the entire emancipatory movement in Russia as "the work of Jewish hands," as an anti-patriotic cause which was foreign to the Russian people. It was part of this plan to engineer somewhere a barbarous anti-Jewish pogrom in order to intimidate the Jewish revolutionaries and to put it forward as a protest of the "Russian people" against the "Jewish revolution." "Drown the revolution in Jewish blood!"—this motto underlay the terrible scheme which, beginning with 1903, was put into execution by the underlings of Nicholas II. at the most crucial moments in the Russian revolutionary movement.

2. THE ORGANIZED KISHINEV BUTCHERY

Needless to say, there was plenty of inflammable material for such an anti-Jewish conflagration. One of the criminal haunts of these incendiaries was situated at that time in Kishinev, the capital of semi-Moldavian Bessarabia. Until the end of the nineteenth century, the fifty thousand Jews of that city had lived in peace and harmony with their Christian neighbors who numbered some sixty thousand. At the beginning of the new century, these friendly relations were severed, owing to the untrammelled anti-Semitic agitation of a local yellow journalist, a petty official by the name of Krushevan. This official had been publishing in Kishinev since 1897 a local sheet under the name of *Bessarabetz* ("The Bessarabian"). Having originally embarked upon a moderately progressive policy, the paper soon sold itself to the local anti-Semitic reactionaries from among the nobility and bureaucracy, and was thenceforth subventioned by the Government. For a number of years Krushevan's paper carried on an unbridled

agitation against the Jews. The Jews were accused of every possible crime, of economic "exploitation," of Socialism, of "hatred towards the Christians," of ritual murders, and of fathering the "Godless revolution." Favored by the powers that be, the *Bessarabetz* could do what it pleased. The censorship of the paper lay in the hands of the deputy-governor of Kishinev, Ustrugov, who during his administrative activity had proved himself a past master in the art of persecuting the Jews and curtailing the crumbs of rights that were still left to them. Under the auspices of such a censor, who was in reality a contributor to the paper, the latter was sure of immunity even when it proceeded to print appeals calling on the Christian population to make pogroms upon the Jews.

This agitation was particularly dangerous in view of the fact that the *Bessarabetz* was the only press organ in the province, the Government consistently refusing to license the publication of any other newspaper. As a matter of fact, Krushevan's activity in Bessarabia was so well thought of by Plehve that in 1902 the mercenary journalist received considerable sums from a special slush fund for the publication of a newspaper in St. Petersburg, under the name *Znamya* ("The Banner"), with a similarly reactionary anti-Semitic tendency. However, in the capital, the filthy sheet was unable to find readers. But as far as the *Bessarabetz* was concerned, its influence was clearly felt. Russian public opinion was affected by the poisonous doses administered to it daily. The sinister instincts of the mob became inflamed more and more, and there was the foreboding of a storm in the air.

In the beginning of 1903, Krushevan found an occasion to give a definite turn to his accustomed pogrom propaganda. In the town of Dubossary the mutilated body of a Russian

peasant boy, Rybalenko, had been found, who, as was subsequently brought out by the judicial inquiry, had been slain by his uncle in the hope of appropriating his portion of a bequest. The *Bessarabetz* immediately launched a campaign against the Jews, accusing them of ritual murder. "Death to the Jews! Let all Zhyds be massacred!"—such appeals were almost daily repeated in the paper which was read in all the saloons and public-houses of Bessarabia. The unenlightened Russian mob itched for an occasion to lay its hands upon the Jews. An attempt at a pogrom was made at Dubossary, but it was frustrated by the local Jews who were of a sturdy physique.

On the eve of the Easter festival of 1903, mysterious rumors were set afloat in Kishinev itself telling of the murder of a Christian servant girl, whose death was ascribed to the Jews. In reality the girl had taken poison and died, despite the efforts of her Jewish master to save her life. The goings-on in Kishinev on the eve of that Easter bore the earmarks of an energetic activity on the part of some secret organization which was hatching an elaborate fiendish scheme. That criminal organization was centered in the local Russian club which was the rallying-point of the officials of the province. Shortly before the holiday, there suddenly appeared in the city an emissary of the political police, the gendarmerie officer Levendahl, who had been despatched from St. Petersburg; after Easter, when the sanguinary crime had already been committed, the same mysterious envoy vanished just as suddenly.

The triumvirate Krushevan-Ustrugov-Levendahl was evidently the soul of the terrible anti-Semitic conspiracy. Printed hand-bills were scattered about in the city, telling the

people that an imperial ukase had been published, granting permission to inflict a "bloody punishment" upon the Jews in the course of the three days of the Christian Passover. The police made no attempt to suppress these circulars, for, as was subsequently brought out, they were in the conspiracy. Several police officials even hinted at the impending events in their talks with Jewish acquaintances. In the saloons and in the tea-houses, the approaching pogrom was the subject of public discussion. The Jews were fully aware of the coming storm, though they scarcely realized that it would take the form not merely of an ordinary pogrom, but of a regular butchery. On the eve of the festival of Passover, the representatives of the Jewish community waited upon the governor and the Chief of Police, praying for protection, and received the cool reply that the necessary instructions had already been given and that the proper measures for their safety had been adopted. The local Greek-Orthodox bishop asked the rabbi, who came to see him on the subject, whether it was true that there was a Jewish sect which used Christian blood for ritual purposes.

The conflagration which was openly prepared by the incendiaries broke out at the moment determined upon. On Sunday, April 6, the first day of the Christian Passover and the seventh day of the Jewish holiday, the church bells began to ring at noontime, and a large crowd of Russian burghers and artisans, acting undoubtedly upon a given signal scattered all over the town, and fell upon the Jewish houses and stores. The bands were preceded by street urchins who were throwing stones at the windows. The rioters, whose number was swelled by these youthful "fighters," seeing that the police

made no attempt to interfere, began to break into the houses and stores, and to throw the contents on the street where everything was destroyed or plundered by the festive crowd. But even then the police and soldier detachments who were stationed on the streets remained passive, and made no attempt to arrest the rioters. This attitude served in the eyes of the mob as a final proof that the rumors concerning the permission of the Tzar "to beat the Jews" were correct. An immense riff-raff, in a state of intoxication, crowded the streets, shouting "Death to the Zhyds! Beat the Zhyds!"

In the evening looting gave way to killing. The murderers, armed with clubs and knives, assailed the Jews in the cars, on the streets, and in the houses, wounding them severely, sometimes even fatally. Even then, the police and military remained inactive; only when in one place a group of Jews, armed with sticks, attempted to drive off the murderers, the police stepped in at once and disarmed the defenders.

At ten o'clock in the evening the looting and killing were suddenly stopped. Rumor had it that the general staff of the rioters were holding a meeting concerning the further plan of military operations, and were making arrangements for a systematic butchery. The "army" soon received the necessary orders, and in the course of the entire day of April 7, from daybreak until eight o'clock in the evening, Kishinev was the scene of bestialities such as find few parallels even in the history of the most barbarous ages. Finding themselves defenceless and exposed to the passions of a savage crowd, many Jewish families hid themselves in their cellars, or in their garrets; and sometimes sought safety in the houses of their Christian neighbors, but the murderers succeeded in

hunting down their unfortunate victims. The Jews were slain in most barbarous fashion. Many of them were not killed at once, but were left writhing in pre-mortal agonies. Some had nails driven into their heads or had their eyes put out. Little children were thrown from garrets to the pavement, and their brains dashed out upon the stones. Women had their stomachs ripped open or their breasts cut off. Many of them became the victims of rape. One gymnasium pupil who saw his mother attacked by these fiends threw himself single-handed upon them, and saved at the cost of his life his mother's honor; he himself was slain, and his mother's eyes were put out. The drunken hordes broke into the synagogue, and, getting hold of the Torah scrolls, tore them to shreds, defiled them, and trampled upon them. In one synagogue, the old *Shammes* (beadle), arrayed in his prayer-shawl, and shielding with his body the Ark containing the sacred scrolls, was savagely murdered by the desecrators on the threshold of the sanctuary.

Throughout the entire day, wagons were seen moving in the streets, carrying wounded and slain Jews to the hospitals which had been converted into field-lazarettes.

But even this sight did not induce the police to step in. The Russian population, outside of a few isolated cases, made no attempt to defend the tormented Jews. The so-called "intelligent" public, the officials with their wives and children, the students, the lawyers, the physicians, walked leisurely upon the streets and looked on indifferently, and sometimes even sympathetically, while the terrible "work" was going on. The governor of Bessarabia, von Raaben, who, on the morning of the second day of the pogrom, was waited upon by a Jewish

deputation begging for protection, replied that he could do nothing since he had received no instructions from St. Petersburg.

At last at five o'clock in the afternoon, a telegram was received from Plehve, and at six o'clock large detachments of troops, fully armed, appeared on the central streets. No sooner had the crowd noticed that the soldiers were ready to act than it took to its heels, without a single shot being fired. Only in the outskirts of the town, which had not yet been reached by the troops, the plunder and massacre continued until late in the evening.

It is needless to point out that had this readiness of the police and military to attend to their duty been displayed in Kishinev at the inception of the pogrom, not a single Jew would have been murdered nor a single house destroyed. As it was, the murderers and rioters were given a free hand for two days, and the result was that forty-five Jews were slain, eighty-six severely wounded or crippled, five hundred slightly wounded, apart from cases of rape, the number of which could not be determined. Fifteen hundred houses and stores were demolished and looted. The victims were mostly among the lower classes of the Jewish population, since many well-to-do Jewish families were able, by bribing the police heavily, to secure the protection of the latter and to have the rioters turned away from their houses. As against the enormous number of Jewish victims, there were only two fatalities among the intoxicated rioters. The Kishinev Jews seemed unable to resist the murderers and sell their lives dearly.

3. ECHOES OF THE KISHINEV TRAGEDY

A cry of horror rang throughout Russia and the more or less civilized countries of the world when the news of the Kishinev butchery became known. The entire liberal Russian press voiced its indignation against the Kishinev atrocities. The most prominent Russian writers expressed their sympathy with the victims in letters and telegrams. Leo Tolstoi voiced his sentiments in a letter which could not be published on account of the censorship.¹ The humanitarian writer Korolenko portrayed the horrors of Kishinev in a heart-rending story under the title "House No. 13," in which, on the basis of personal observation, he pictured how the Jewish residents of one house were tortured to death by the rioters. The story was circulated in an illegal edition, its publication having

¹ The following extract may show that the great writer had a profound insight into the causes of the Kishinev barbarities:

"My opinion concerning the Kishinev crime is the result also of my religious convictions. Upon the receipt of the first news which was published in the papers, not yet knowing all the appalling details which were communicated subsequently, I fully realized the horror of what had taken place, and experienced simultaneously a burning feeling of pity for the innocent victims of the cruelty of the populace, amazement at the bestiality of all these so-called Christians, revulsion at all these so-called cultured people who instigated the mob and sympathized with its actions. But I felt a particular horror for the principal culprit, our Government with its clergy which fosters in the people bestial sentiments and fanaticism, with its horde of murderous officials. The crime committed at Kishinev is nothing but a direct consequence of that propaganda of falsehood and violence which is conducted by the Russian Government with such energy. The attitude adopted by the Russian Government in relation to this question may only serve as a new proof of the class egotism of this Government, which stops at no cruelty whenever it finds it necessary to check movements that are deemed dangerous by it. Like the Turkish Government at the time of the Armenian massacres, it remains entirely indifferent to the most horrible acts of cruelty, as long as these acts do not affect its interests."

been strictly forbidden by the censor. But in Russia itself, the cry was stifled by the heavy hand of Plehve's censorship, and wherever a fraction of the terrible truth managed to slip through the barriers of the censor, Plehve sent out warnings to the papers threatening to discontinue their publication for the "pursuit of an injurious policy." Such a fate actually overtook the Russian-Jewish *Voskhod*, in St. Petersburg, the legal journal *Pravo* ("The Law"), and others. The entire Russian press was forced by the Government to publish the falsified version embodied in its official reports, in which the organized massacre was toned down to a casual brawl, and the inactivity of the troops was explained either by the inadequacy of their numbers—despite the fact that several battalions were stationed in the city—or by the incapacity of the police, while the dead and wounded were referred to in a vague manner so as to suggest that the victims of the "brawl" were to be found on both sides.

But the revelations in the foreign press were of a nature to stagger all Europe and America. The correspondent of the London *Times* published the text of a secret letter addressed by Plehve to the governor of Bessarabia, in which, two weeks before the pogrom, the latter official was told that, in the case of anti-Jewish "disorders," "no recourse shall be taken to armed interference with the urban population, so as not to arouse hostility to the Government in a population which has not yet been affected by the revolutionary propaganda." The authenticity of this letter is not entirely beyond suspicion. But there can be no doubt that instructions to that effect, rather by word of mouth than in writing, probably through the secret agent Levendahl, had been actually transmitted to the authorities in Kishinev.

From the fact that on the second day of the pogrom the governor was still waiting for instructions from St. Petersburg permitting him to discontinue the massacre it is evident that he must have received previous orders to allow it to proceed up to a certain point. The horrors of the Armenian massacres in Turkey, against which even Russian diplomacy had protested more than once, faded into insignificance before the wholesale butchery at Kishinev. Europe and America were deeply agitated. The Jews outside of Russia collected large funds for their unhappy Russian brethren, but their efforts exhausted themselves in sympathy and philanthropy.

The effect of the catastrophe upon Russian Jewry was more lasting. A mixed feeling of wrath and shame seized the Jewish public—wrath against the organizers and abettors of the terrible crime, and shame for the tortured and degraded brethren who, not having a chance to save their lives, had failed to save their honor by offering stout resistance to these beasts in human shape, who were sure of immunity. The poet Frug poured forth his sentiments in a Yiddish poem, voicing his sorrow at the physical helplessness of his nation and confining himself to an appeal to the kind Jewish heart: Too keen and grievous is our pain, too weak our hand the blow to parry.

Come on, then, tender Jewish heart, and love and comfort to us carry!

Brothers, sisters, pray, have pity; dire and dreadful is our need: Shrouds we want the dead to bury, and bread that the living we may feed.¹

¹ *Schlaff is unser Hand zu streiten, stark un schwer is unser Schmerz,
Kum-zhe du mit Treist un Liebe, gutes heisses jüdisch Herz!
Brüder, Schwester, hot rachmones; groiss un schrecklich is di Noit,
Giebt di Toite oif Tachrichim, giebt di Lebedige Broit!*

A little later, the young poet Bialik gave powerful utterance to his feeling of wrath and shame in his "Burden of Nemirov."¹ He makes God address these words to the martyred nation:

Your dead have died in vain, and neither you nor I
Can say for what they gave their lives, and why
No tears shall flow for you!—the Lord swears by His Name—
For though the pain be great, great also is the shame,
And which of them the greater, thou, son of man, decide

In picturing the memorial services held in honor of the Kishinev victims at the synagogues, he angrily exclaims in the name of God:

Lift thine eyes and look how steeped they are in grief.
You hear them cry and sob and mournful prayers read.
You see them beat their breasts and for forgiveness plead
What are they praying for? Tell them to protest!
To shake their fists at Me and justice to demand!
Justice for all they've suffered throughout the generations,
So that My Heaven and Throne shall quake to their foundations!

Neither the pogroms at the beginning of the eighties, nor the Moscow atrocities at the beginning of the nineties can compare, in their soul-stirring effect upon Russian Jewry, with the massacre of Kishinev. It awakened the burning feeling of martyrdom, but with it also the feeling of heroism. All were seized by one and the same impulse—the organization

¹ *Massa Nemirov*. This heading was chosen to appease the censor. As the name Kishinev could not be mentioned, Nemirov was chosen, being the name of the town which yielded the largest number of victims during the Cossack massacres of 1648. [See vol. I, p. 146, *et seq.*—In a later edition the poem was renamed *Be-Ir ha-Haregah*, "In the city of Slaughter."]

of self-defence, as if to say: "Since the Government fails to defend our life and honor, then we ourselves are bound to defend it." The pogrom panic which spread over the entire South following upon the terrible days of April 6-7 led to the organization of self-defence societies in a number of cities. Plehve knew of these preparations, and found himself in a difficult position. He realized that these endeavors might interfere with the engineering of the pogroms, since the latter would no longer be safe for the murderers and plunderers, and he was, moreover, full of apprehension that these self-defence societies might become hotbeds of a revolutionary propaganda and provide a training ground for political demonstrations. These apprehensions were voiced in a circular issued at the end of April, in which the Minister instructed the governors, first, that "no self-defence societies should be tolerated," and, second, that the authorities should adopt measures for the "prevention of violence" and the "suppression of lawlessness." Subsequent events showed that the latter order was never put into effect. The first instruction, however, was carried out with relentless cruelty, and, during the following pogroms, the troops made it their first business to shoot down the members of the self-defence.

Such being the frame of mind of Russian Jewry, the ukase of May 10, 1903, opening up to the Jews for "free domicile" one hundred and one localities in various governments of the Pale of Settlement, which had hitherto been barred to them under the "Temporary Rules" of 1882, was received with complete indifference. As a matter of fact, many of the rural settlements, included in that ukase, were in reality towns which had been converted into "villages," at the instigation of spite-

ful officials, for the sole purpose of rendering them inaccessible to the Jews. The stolen property was now returned with a slight surplus. The Danaid gift, which seemed to be offered to the Jews as a compensation for the Kishinev horrors, could not but fill them with disgust. Parenthetically it may be remarked that the Government itself nullified the moral effect of its "act of grace" by issuing on the same day a new repressive law prohibiting the privileged Jews who were entitled to the right of domicile outside the Pale of Settlement from acquiring real property in the villages and hamlets. The knot of rightlessness was loosened by a hair's breadth in one place, and tightened in another.

Grief and shame over "the Kishinev days" armed the hand of Pincus Dashevski, a high-minded Jewish youth, against the most culpable instigator of the massacre—Krushevan. Dashevski, the son of a military surgeon, travelled from Kiev, where he was a student at the Polytechnicum, to St. Petersburg to inflict punishment on the miserable hireling of Judæophobia, who had caused the Kishinev conflagration by his criminal newspaper agitation. On June 4, 1903, he assailed Krushevan in the heart of the capital, on the so-called Nevski Prospect, wounding him in the neck with a knife. The wound proved of no consequence, and the "victim" was able to go home, without accepting the first aid proffered to him in a Jewish drug store nearby. Dashevski was arrested and brought to trial. At the preliminary examination he frankly confessed that he had intended to avenge the Kishinev massacre by killing Krushevan. Krushevan, now more ferocious than ever, demanded in his newspaper *Znamya* that the Jewish avenger be court-martialled and executed, and his demand was echoed

by the entire anti-Semitic press. The case was tried in a district court behind closed doors, the Government of Plehve evidently fearing the appearance of the sanguinary ghost of Kishinev in the court-room.

Krushevan was represented by the anti-Semitic lawyer Shmakov, who subsequently figured in the Beilis trial. The counsel for Dashevski (the lawyer Gruzenberg and others) pleaded that his client's act had been inspired by the intention not to kill, but merely to voice his protest against the unbridled criminal activity of Krushevan. Dashevski received the severe sentence of penal military service for five years (August 26). An appeal was taken to the Senate, but the judgment of the lower court was sustained. The youth who, in a fit of righteous indignation, had given vent to the outraged feelings of his martyred nation, was put in chains and sent into the midst of murderers and thieves, while the venal instigator, whose hands were stained with the blood of numerous victims, escaped unscathed, and assisted by public funds, continued his criminal activity of fanning the hatred of the populace against the Jews.

4. DOCTOR HERZL'S VISIT TO RUSSIA

The alert bureaucratic mind of Plehve was quick to make its deductions from the Dashevski case. He realized that the Kishinev massacre would inflame the national Jewish sentiment and divert the national or Zionist cause into the channel of the revolutionary movement. Accordingly, on June 24, 1903, Plehve issued a circular to the governors, which was marked "strictly confidential," and sent out through the Police Department, ordering the adoption of energetic measures

against "the propaganda of the ideas of Zionism," which had departed from its original aim—the transfer of Jews to Palestine—and "had directed its activity towards strengthening the Jewish national idea," preaching "the organization of the Jews in secluded societies in the places of their present domicile." Acting upon these orders, the police began to persecute the Zionists in a number of cities, prohibiting the sale of Jewish Colonial Trust shares, collections for the Jewish National Fund, and meetings and conferences of the Zionist societies.

Shortly thereafter, on July 25, the leader of the Zionists, Dr. Herzl, arrived in St. Petersburg to induce the Russian authorities to discontinue these persecutions. Apart from this immediate object, Herzl had another more important mission in mind. He hoped to obtain a promise from the Russian Government to exert a diplomatic pressure upon Turkey in favor of permitting the settlement of Jews in Palestine on a large scale. During his four interviews with Plehve, the Zionist leader succeeded in convincing the minister that "it was in keeping with the interests of the Russian Government to assist the Zionist movement." Plehve replied—and subsequently confirmed his reply in writing—that the Russian Government was willing to help Zionism so long as its political activity would be directed towards the attainment of its aims outside of Russia, towards the creation of a Jewish center in Palestine and the emigration of the Jews from Russia, but that as soon as the movement would be turned inwards, that is, towards the propaganda of the Jewish national idea and the organization of Jewry in Russia itself, it would not be tolerated, being subversive of the Russian national policies. Herzl assured Plehve

that political Zionism *sans phrase* had no other aim in view, except the creation of a center outside of the Diaspora.

Both Plehve and Herzl seemed to be satisfied with the results of their conversation. Herzl saw also the Minister of Finance, Witte, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lamsdorff, and left St. Petersburg in a hopeful mood. On his way to St. Petersburg, particularly during his stay in Vilna, Herzl was the object of stormy ovations by the Zionists. At the same time, he was severely criticized by the representatives of other Jewish political groups who thought that he had lowered the national dignity of the Jewish people by conducting negotiations for the salvation of Jewry with the man on whose forehead was stamped the Cain's mark of Kishinev.

It seems that the severe crisis which had set in for political Zionism, when the hope for obtaining a charter from the Sultan had receded into a distance, had impelled Herzl to catch at a straw, at negotiations with the Russian Government. He was evidently of the opinion that the Russian Pharaohs who had countenanced the methods of reducing the Jewish population in Russia, such as had been practised at Kishinev, might be willing to achieve the same object by rendering its diplomatic assistance to the Zionist plans. A pledge in this direction was actually given to Herzl. But Herzl overestimated the importance of the promises made to him by potentates who merely looked upon him as a noble-minded dreamer.

Two weeks after Herzl's visit to St. Petersburg, the acuteness of the Zionist crisis manifested itself at the sixth Congress at Basle (August 11-16, 1903). On that occasion Herzl announced his new project, the colonization of Uganda, in British East Africa, by virtue of a charter which had been

offered to him by the British Government. He pointed out that this project had a definite aim in view—the amelioration of the terrible condition of Russian Jewry, for which purpose Zion at that particular moment was not available. Herzl's pronouncement rent the Congress in twain: one section seized enthusiastically upon the Uganda project, which held out the promise of at least a temporary shelter in Africa, a *Nachstasyl*, for a part of the agonized nation. The other section protested violently against this attempt to create a "Zionism without Zion," against the abandonment of Palestine and the higher aspirations of the movement. After many stormy and soul-stirring scenes, the majority of the Congress adopted a resolution to send an expedition to Uganda to investigate the proffered country from the point of view of its fitness for Jewish colonization. Thereupon, all the opponents of the Uganda project, the so-called *Neinsager* (the "Nay-sayers"), mostly Russian Zionists, left the Congress hall in a body.

The movement was now rent by a severe conflict, the result of the struggle between the two principles which had long been intermingled in the theoretic foundations of Zionism: Palestinianism and Territorialism. This internal conflict culminated in an open split between these two principles. Out of the Zionist movement was born the Territorialist Organization, which proclaimed as its object the creation of a Jewish autonomous center on any available point of the globe. For the blood of Kishinev cried out for an exodus from the new Egypt. The emigration to the United States, where the prisoners of Tzardom had in the course of twenty years, beginning with 1881, succeeded in forming a big Jewish center, had passed the million mark, and was expected to assume larger and

larger dimensions. The Jewish public press insisted on the necessity "of regulating the emigration to America not only as a social-economic, but also as a national factor." It was pointed out that a considerable portion of the historic national center in Russia and Poland was, under the pressure of external events, in the process of removing to North America, and that practical Jewish politics had the direct duty of organizing this great rising center of Jewry.

CHAPTER XXXIV
CONTINUED POGROMS AND THE RUSSO-
JAPANESE WAR

1. THE POGROM AT HOMEL AND THE JEWISH SELF-DEFENCE

No sooner had the Zionist Congress, at which the heated discussions concerning the salvation of Judaism were intermingled with sobs bemoaning the martyrs of Kishinev, concluded its sessions than a new catastrophe broke out in the dominions of the Tzar—the pogrom at Homel, in the Government of Moghilev. In this lively White-Russian town, in which the twenty thousand Jews formed fully one-half of the population, public Jewish life was marked by great vigor. There existed in the city important societies of Zionists and Socialists. Both of these parties had organized several self-defence contingents, and it was to be expected that the disgrace of Kishinev would not be repeated at Homel, and that, in the case of an attack, the Jews would give a good account of themselves.

On August 29, 1903, a fight broke out on the market-place between a crowd of Jews and Christians. The cause of the quarrel was a trivial incident, one peasant trying to carry off from a Jewish store a barrel of herrings at a lower price than the one demanded by the storekeeper. The rowdyish purchaser was pushed out of the store, but the peasants on the market-place took sides with him, and in the ensuing fight between them and the Jew, one peasant was accidentally killed. The peasants were scared and took to their heels, while the police began to make arrests among the Jews. The Jews might have been

satisfied with the fact that their energetic attitude had succeeded in preventing a pogrom, did they not anticipate the revenge which was sure to be wreaked upon them.

Two days passed in a state of tense agitation. On the third day, on September 1, a crowd of Russian workingmen, numbering about two hundred, issued forth from the railroad shops, and began to demolish Jewish residences and houses of worship. The rioters were joined by a mob of stone-cutters, day-laborers, and ragamuffins. Here and there the crowd was incited by a few "intellectuals": a merchant, a student, and a teacher. On the Konnaya Square, the mob was checked by a large detachment of the Jewish self-defence, consisting of several hundred men. The rioters were on the point of giving way before the gallant attack of the self-defence; but at that moment the troops appeared on the scene, and fired a volley in the direction of the Jews, resulting in three killed and several wounded. The assistance rendered by the troops filled the rioters with fresh courage, and they continued their work of destruction with renewed vigor. All over the town a chain of soldiers shielded the attacking hordes against the Jewish self-defence contingents which tried in vain to break through the chain. The defenders were driven off with rifle butts and bayonets, while the rioters were allowed to destroy and murder without let or hindrance. In the evening, the pogrom was stopped; the results were twelve killed or dangerously wounded Jews, eight killed or dangerously wounded Christians, a large number of maltreated and slightly wounded Jews and over two hundred and fifty devastated Jewish residences and stores. Among those arrested by the police was a considerably larger number of self-defending Jews than of attacking Christians.

Two days later, the governor of Moghilev came to Homel, and, having summoned the Jews to the Town Council, treated them to the following harangue:

I am sorry for the unhappy victims, but how could such bitterness have arisen? Religious toleration in Russia is complete. The causes of the latest events lie deeper. The Jews have now become the leaders and instigators in all movements directed against the Government. This entire "Bund" and the Social-Democrats—they are all Jews. You are yourselves to blame for all that has happened. You do not educate your children properly. You have no influence over them. But at least you can surrender them, pointing them out to the Government, whereas you conceal them. You propagate disobedience and opposition to the Government among an uncivilized population. But the Russian populace does not care for it and turns against you.

It would seem as if Plehve himself had spoken through the mouth of the governor. The Russian functionary expressed with naïve and clumsy frankness the hidden thought of the Chief of the Political Inquisition—the idea of punishing the fathers for the revolutionary leanings of their children, who were to be surrendered to the police, and of discrediting the entire Russian liberty movement as a "Jewish cause." In a Government communication which appeared after the pogrom the events at Homel were reported in such a way as to suggest that they were brought about by an attack of the Jews upon Christian residents and upon the troops, in consequence of which the latter had been forced to fire in "self-defence." The final deduction was formulated thus: "The cause of the disorders lies in the extremely hostile and defiant attitude of the local Jews toward the Christians." Thus were the actual facts distorted in an official document, and the tortured were put forward as the torturers.

The Homel pogrom did not attain to the dimensions of the Kishinev massacre, nor was it as painful to the moral consciousness of the Jews. For in Homel the Jews did not allow themselves to be beaten and slaughtered like sheep, but put up a valiant defence. Had the troops not turned against the self-defence, the pogrom would not have taken place, and the cowardly rabble would have taken to flight before the gallant defenders of their national honor. Already in the spring, Plehve had foreseen that the Jews would attempt to organize a self-defence of their own, and he had in his previously mentioned circular declared in advance that this most fundamental right of human beings to defend their lives was "inadmissible." Accordingly, several Jewish heroes paid with their lives for having violated this ministerial circular. Their death was the foreboding of a new Jewish martyrdom. All this had the natural effect of enormously intensifying the revolutionary sentiments of the Jewish youth and of inspiring them with hatred towards a régime which permitted some of its citizens to commit murder and prohibited others to defend their lives.

2. THE KISHINEV MASSACRE AT THE BAR OF RUSSIAN JUSTICE

In the fall of 1903 the judicial investigation in connection with the spring pogrom in Kishinev was nearing its end. The investigation was conducted with a view to obliterating the traces of the deliberate organization of the pogrom. The representatives of Government authority and of the better classes whose complicity in the Kishinev massacre had been clearly established were carefully eliminated from the trial, and only the hired assassins and plunderers from among the

lower classes, numbering about four hundred men, were brought to justice. Prompted by fear lest the terrible truth might leak out in the court, the Ministry of Justice ordered the case to be tried behind closed doors. By this act, the blood-stained Russian Government refused in advance to rehabilitate itself before the civilized world, which looked upon it as the instigator of the catastrophe.

In the court proceedings, the echo of which penetrated beyond the walls of the closed court-room, the counsel for the defence from among the best representatives of the Russian bar (Karabchevski, Sokolov, and others, who were Christians, and the Jews Gruzenberg, Kalmanovich, and others) succeeded in proving that the prisoners at the bar were only blind tools in the commission of the crime, whereas the organizers of the butchery and the ring-leaders of the mob were escaping justice.¹ They demanded that the case be probed to the bottom. The court refused their demand, whereupon the lawyers, having stated their reasons, withdrew from the court-room one after the other.² The only advocates left were the anti-Semite

¹ One of the instigators, Pisarevski, a notary public, had blown out his brains before the beginning of the trial. Other instigators from among the Kishinev *intelligenza* appeared merely as witnesses.

² The speech of Karabchevski justifying his withdrawal was particularly powerful. He openly declared that the pogrom was only "the fulfilment of a criminal order given from above." "The whole of Kishinev," he said, "was converted during the excesses into an immense circus of antiquity, where, before the eyes of curious spectators from among the administration and the army, before a festively attired crowd, a terrible drama was enacted in the depth of the arena. From the one side defenceless victims were driven upon the arena, and from the other maddened beasts were set at them, until the signal to stop was given, and the frightful spectacle was ended at once."

Shmakov and other whole-hearted defenders of the Kishinev massacre, who regarded the latter as a manifestation of the honor and conscience of the Russian people. In the end, the court sentenced a score of murderers and rioters of the first group to hard labor or penal service, dismissing at the same time the civil actions for damages presented by the Jews.

Six months later the Kishinev case came up before the Senate, the Jews appearing as complainants against Governor von Raaben (who had been dismissed after the pogrom), Deputy-Governor Ustrugov, and the Kishinev Chief of Police, upon whom they fastened the responsibility. The bureaucratic defendants cynically declared "that the losses suffered by the Jews have been covered many times over by contributions from Russia, Western Europe, and America." All the eloquence of the well-known lawyer Vinaver and of his associates failed to convince the judges of the Senate, and the petition for damages was dismissed. The Government did not wish to create a precedent for compensating pogrom victims out of public funds, for "this might place the representatives of the administration in an impossible position," as was stated with naïve frankness by von Raaben, since it might become necessary to increase the imperial budget by several million rubles a year.

In the midst of these ghastly proceedings Plehve conceived the plan of "regulating the legislation concerning the Jews." In August, 1903, he sent out a circular to the governors, calling upon them, in view of the extraordinarily complex and tangled condition of the Russian laws affecting the Jews, to point out ways and means "of bringing these legal enactments into proper order and into as harmonious a system as possible."

In reply to this circular, the governor of Vilna, Pahlen, submitted an extensive memorial, in which he pointed out that all the restrictive laws within the boundaries of the Pale of Settlement ought to be repealed on account of their pernicious political influence, since they were driving the Jews into the ranks of the paupers or revolutionaries. At the same time he suggested to retain the repressive measures "against the manifestation of the injurious characteristics of Judaism on the part of certain individuals" and also to exclude the Jewish youth from the Christian schools and establish for them special elementary and intermediate schools under the supervision of Christian teachers. A few other governors, among them the new governor of Bessarabia, Urussov, also expressed themselves in favor of mitigating the repressive policy against the Jews.

In January, 1904, a committee of governors and of several high officials representing the Ministry of the Interior met to consider the Jewish question. From the very beginning the conferees were given to understand that in "the highest spheres" every thought of the slightest mitigation of the condition of Jewry was taboo. The only liberal member of the committee, Governor Urussov, subsequently stated that after the Kishinev pogrom and the agitation raised by it "one could feel quite tangibly the unfriendly attitude of the highest spheres toward the Jews"—in other words, that the hatred toward the Jews was shared personally by the Tzar and by his *camarilla*. The committee therefore applied itself to the task, not of reforming Jewish legislation, but rather of systematizing the anti-Jewish code of laws. Its labors were interrupted by the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War, on January 27, 1904.

3. THE JEWS IN THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR

On the day following the declaration of war, the organ of Russian Jewry, the *Voskhod*, wrote as follows:

This is not the time to irritate the old wounds. Let us endeavor, as far as it is in our power, to forget also the recent expulsion from Port Arthur,¹ the pogroms of Kishinev and Homel, and many, many other things. . . . Let the Jewish parents not think of the bitter fate of their children who had been thrown overboard [by being barred from the educational establishments]. The Jews will go forth into battle as plain soldiers, without any hope of attaining an officer's rank, or shoulder-straps, or distinctions—the blood of our sons will flow as freely as that of the Russians.

The Jews marched to the Far East to assist Russia in making the province of Manchuria part of Siberia in which they were forbidden to reside. The number of Jews at the front was disproportionately large—it amounted to some thirty thousand, owing to the fact that, in accordance with the usual military regulations, the Jewish recruits from the Western governments were generally despatched to Siberia, so that, at the very outset, they were near the theatre of military operations. Disproportionately large was also the number of Jewish physicians in the reserves. They were mobilized at once, evidently for the reason that they lived on their private practice and were not allowed to occupy any state or public office, whereas the Russian physicians were not drawn upon to the same extent, so as not to divert them from their administra-

¹ About two months before the war, the Russian viceroy of the Far East had prohibited the Jews from residing in Port Arthur and upon the Kuantung Peninsula, whence the Russians were expelled by the Japanese a year later.

tive, municipal, or Zemstvo services.¹ Hundreds of Jewish physicians had to work and to encounter the murderous fire of the Japanese because of the fact that an unjust law deprived them of the right of civil service in time of peace.

While scores of thousands of disfranchised Jews were fighting for the prestige of Russia in the Far East, the whip of rightlessness did not cease to lash their brethren at home. In a number of places the authorities began to expel the families of the soldiers and physicians who had been sent to the war, on the ground that with the departure of the head of the family the wife and children had forfeited the right of residence, the latter being conditioned by the profession of the husband or father. This policy, however, was too monstrous even for St. Petersburg, and Plehve was soon forced to decree that the families of the mobilized Jews should be left in their places of residence, "pending the termination of the war."

Though the Government was compelled to relax for a while its oppression of the Jews, social Judæophobia, fanned by the chauvinism incident to war time, broke out with greater violence than ever. Irritated by the rapid failures of the Russian arms and by the unexpected military superiority of the Japanese, the reactionary press, headed by the *Novoye Vremya*, began to circulate preposterous rumors to the effect that the Jews were secretly helping the Japanese, their "kinsmen by race," in order to wreak their vengeance upon Russia for having perpetrated the Kishinev massacres. The story of the Jewish-Japanese alliance issued from the public press of the capital to

¹ Out of the thirty physicians who were mobilized in Kiev twenty-six were Jews. In Odessa, the Jews furnished twenty-one physicians out of thirty.

make its rounds through the provinces, and each day gave birth to a rumor more absurd than the other: the Jews are exporting gold abroad, they are purchasing horses for Japan, they are collecting money to build cruisers for the Mikado, they are provoking England and America against Russia, and similar preposterous stories. It was clear that these rumors were the work of a gang of unscrupulous agitators *à la* Krushevan, who were eager to instigate anti-Jewish pogroms on a modern basis—the accusation of “treachery.” This assumption is confirmed by the additional fact that these incendiary rumors were particularly circulated in February and March, before the Easter festival, the old-time pogrom season, just as in the preceding year the ritual murder libel of Dubossary had been kept afloat during the same months. “The incendiaries have already set out upon their work”—with these words the Jewish organ *Voskhod* warned its readers in its issue of March 11. A week later, the same paper had occasion to publish accounts of the panic which had spread among the Jewish population, particularly in the South. In Kishinev, a second pogrom was feared, calling forth an intensified emigration to America. In Odessa, the Jews were agitated by sinister rumors, and began to prepare themselves for self-defence. This state of alarm was reflected in the foreign press. It was rumored that the American ambassador at St. Petersburg had received instructions to make representations to the Russian Government—which rumor was subsequently officially denied.

Fortunately the Government itself came to the conclusion that the time of war was not a fit opportunity for arranging pogroms. The governors received orders to adopt energetic measures for the prevention of Passover excesses.

Governor Urussov of Bessarabia and the city-governor of Odessa addressed serious warnings to the Russian population. These steps had the desired effect. As soon as the police and population realized that the pogroms were not desired from above, the agitation collapsed; and in April the papers were able to tell their readers that "Passover has passed quietly everywhere." In his *Memoirs* Urussov tells us that, during the restless day preceding the Easter festival in Kishinev, he had been engaged, together with the Chief of Police, in working out a plan looking to the maintenance of public order in the city; during this conference he noticed that the Chief of Police was rather hesitant and puzzled. This hesitation continued until the governor received from Plehve a telegram in cipher, calling upon him to prevent pogroms. No sooner had Urussov shown the Chief of Police the deciphered telegram than the latter exclaimed: "Don't trouble yourself—now there will be no disorders in Kishinev." Such was the spirit in which the provincial administrators had been trained. Without a special order from St. Petersburg, they did not have the courage to suppress the pogroms.

4. THE "POLITICAL SPRING"

On the morning of July 15, 1904, the square before the Warsaw depôt in St. Petersburg presented a terrible sight. Upon the pavement lay the blood-stained body of Plehve, who had been smitten by the bomb of the Russian terrorist Sazonov while on his way to Peterhof where he was to report to the Tzar. This meant that the revolution had again raised its head. After two years of frenzied police terrorism, and in spite of all attempts to divert the attention of the public from the neces-

sity of reforms, first by pogroms and then by the war against Japan—Plehve had insisted upon the declaration of war, hoping to drown the “seditious” movement in chauvinism—the revolutionary spectre was once more haunting the country. The martyrs of the autocratic inquisition perceived the “finger of God” in the calamities caused by the war and in the miserable end of Plehve. In February, 1904, the Russian censor confiscated an issue of the *Voskhod* in which a young Jewish sibyl, in a poem entitled “To Haman,” referring to the biblical *Mene, Mene, Tekel u-Farsin*, predicted a shameful death for the new Haman who was easily identified as the hero of Kishinev. One could feel in the air the coming of a cleansing tempest. Even the reactionary Government was taken aback by the approaching storm. It did not dare to answer the terrorism of the revolution with police terrorism. On the contrary, it made an attempt to moderate the régime of serfdom.

On August 11, on the occasion of the birth of the heir-apparent Alexis, an imperial manifesto was issued, granting “favours” and “privileges” to the population, the most important of which consisted in the abrogation of corporal punishment for peasants and soldiers. On the same day, a ukase was promulgated in which the Tzar “thought it *just* to introduce, pending the general revision of the legislation affecting the Jews, several amendments in the enactments concerning their rights of residence at present in force.” The amendments were trifling: the Jews with a higher education were permitted to live in the villages and acquire real property there, as well as to carry on business everywhere. Those who had participated in the Japanese war, and had distinguished them-

selves or had conducted themselves irreproachably were to be accorded the right of universal domicile. The wives and under-aged children of the Jews with a higher education were granted the right of residence even after the death of their husbands and fathers. These rights were the only ones which the Government thought it "just" to confer upon the Jews, who had sent thirty thousand people into the active army to fight on the fields of Manchuria. The Jewish public received this niggardly gift with chilly indifference, and turned its gaze to wider horizons which were then opening up before Russia. The country was on the eve of a "political spring."

On August 26 the post of Minister of the Interior was entrusted to Svyatopolk-Mirski, who in his previous capacity of governor-general of Vilna had displayed comparative administrative leniency. The new leader of internal Russian politics promised that he would strive for the restoration of "confidence" between the Government and the people by adjusting his actions to the demands of "true progress." The Jewish deputation which waited upon him at Vilna and the representatives of the foreign press were told that as far as the Jewish question was concerned, he would be guided by justice and "kindness." Unfortunately, at the very beginning he showed himself powerless to stem the new tide of pogroms. At the end of August, the Russian South was the scene of several "regular" pogroms, beginning with a quarrel in a Jewish store and ending with the demolition of Jewish stores and houses—as was the case in the town of Smyela, in the government of Kiev, on August 22, or in the city of Rovno, in Volhynia, where a similar attempt was made on the same day.

Soon these "regular" riots gave way to a new variety of pogroms, which were distinguished by a peculiar coloring and might be termed "mobilization pogroms." The mobilized Russian reserve troops, wrought up over their impending departure to the fields of death in Manchuria where the Russian army suffered defeat after defeat, directed their protest along the line of least resistance—against the Jews. The soldiers, fortifying themselves with goodly doses of alcohol, began their "gallant exploits," and, accompanied by the street mobs, engaged in the task of devastating Jewish homes, maltreating their inmates, and looting their property. A sanguinary pogrom took place in Alexandria, in the government of Khereson, on September 6 and 7. On the sacred day of Yom Kippur a horde of intoxicated assassins invaded the synagogue which was crowded with worshippers, and butchered there twenty people in a most barbarous fashion. Among the severely wounded, who soon afterwards died from the wounds, were several gymnasium and university students. The police made no attempt to stop the killing and looting, and only on the second day, when the excesses were renewed, the Cossacks were summoned from an adjacent town, and succeeded in restoring order.

A month later, the mobilized Russian reservists began to perpetrate a series of pogroms in the North, in the region of White Russia. In the city of Moghilev the lawlessness of the soldiers and the local hooligans assumed appalling dimensions (October 10). The poorest quarters of the town suffered most. Among the victims of the riots were also the families of Jewish reservists who had gone to war. From the capital of the government the pogrom epidemic spread all over the

region. Everywhere the intoxicated "crusaders," prior to their departure for Manchuria, engaged in destruction, looting, and incendiarism. In some places, as was the case in the government of Vitebsk, the rioters acted with perfect religious toleration, and even attacked the police, although the center of the "stage" was still occupied by the Jews.

The Government was manifestly unwilling to adopt energetic measures against the "defenders of the Fatherland" for fear of irritating them still further and spoiling the progress of mobilization. It was not until the end of October that the mobilization pogroms died out.

5. THE HOMEL POGROM BEFORE THE RUSSIAN COURTS

In the same month of October, 1904, the case of the Homel pogrom of the previous year came up before the Court of Appeals of the Government of Kiev, which held its sessions at Homel. The department of justice had taken a whole year to prepare the evidence, prompted by the desire not so much to investigate the case as to entangle it and present it in a perverted political interpretation. The investigation which had started in the lifetime of Plehve and proceeded under the pressure of the anti-Semitic reactionary, Minister of Justice Muravyov, resulted in a bill of indictment which was a flagrant example of deliberate misrepresentation. The whole affair was pictured as an anti-Russian pogrom which had been perpetrated by the Jews. According to this version, the Jews of Homel, wishing to avenge the Kishinev massacre, had taken up arms and attacked the Christian population on August 29, thereby calling forth a counter-pogrom on the part of the Russian workingmen on September 1, when again the armed Jewish

self-defence had taken an aggressive attitude and thereby forced the soldiers to shoot at them. Sixty people were indicted on this charge, among them thirty-six Jews, representing the part of the population which had been the victims of the pogrom. The Jews who had dared to defend themselves stood at the prisoners' bar side by side with their assailants. Yielding to the pressure of public opinion, the Government decided to have the Homel case tried in open court, but the president of the tribunal was instructed to eliminate from the judicial proceedings all political revelations which might embarrass the Government. The élite of the legal profession, both among Jews and non-Jews (Vinaver, Sliosberg, Kalmanovich, Ratner, Sokolov, Kupernik, Zarudny, and others), assembled at Homel to plead the cause of the indicted Jews and to defend the action for damages brought by the Jewish pogrom victims. The trial was drawn out for nearly three months, reducing itself to a duel between the counsel who endeavored to bring out the facts, and the bench which was anxious to suppress them. The depositions of the witnesses and the cross-examinations of the Jewish lawyers succeeded in demolishing the entire structure of the indictment, but when the case reached the stage which was bound to lead to the detection of the real authors of the pogrom and lay bare the conduct of the authorities, the president stopped the counsel despotically, denying them the floor. The gross partiality manifested by the president of the court had the effect that the counsel for the defence lost their patience, and on December 21, after a violent scene, refused to participate in the trial and demonstratively left the court-room.

This action aroused public opinion throughout Russia to an extraordinary degree; it caused a storm of indignation against this official miscarriage of justice, and the fearless defenders received innumerable expressions of sympathy. The indicted Jews, too, joined in the noble demonstration of their lawyers, which was in itself an eloquent plea for a righteous cause. The trial terminated in January, 1905, and ended in the acquittal of half of the accused Jews and Christians and a verdict of guilty against the other half from among both groups. The guilty were sentenced to comparatively light penalties—to imprisonment for brief terms—and, in addition, the court decided to petition the Tzar for a mitigation even of these penalties.

This verdict displayed the Jesuitic character of Russian politics. The reprobate murderers and plunderers from among the Russian group were either acquitted altogether, or were sentenced to trifling penalties and placed on the same level of culpability with the members of the Jewish self-defence whose only crime was that they had stood up for their life, honor, and property. The Russian law journal *Pravo* ("The Law"), the organ of the progressive Russian *intelligenza*, published on this occasion a strong article which concluded with the following words:

The truth stands out in bold relief even in this verdict, and it does so against the wish of its authors. If, as is implied in this verdict, both the Jews and Christians are guilty of murder, violence, and plunder to a minimum degree only—for how could otherwise the extraordinary leniency of the verdict be justified?—then everybody is bound to ask himself the question: Who then is the real author of all the horrors that were perpetrated at Homel? Those who have followed the course of the judicial in-

vestigation with some degree of attention can only have one answer: Besides the Christians and the Jews, there is still a third culprit, the politically rotten officialdom. This culprit did not stand at the prisoners' bar, but the verdict is against him. . . . The best elements of the Russian public, and the Jews in particular, have been thirsting for justice and for the disclosure of the truth, but it was just that third accomplice who was afraid of justice and has managed to cover it up by a general amnesty.

Such was the end of the two ill-fated years of Russian-Jewish history (1903-1904)—years, marked by the internal war against the Jews and by the external war against Japan, filled with the victories of the reaction at Kishinev and Homel and the defeats of the Russian arms at Port Arthur, Liao-Yang, and Mukden. This ghastly interval of reactionary terrorism, which began to subside only towards the end of 1904, drove from Russia to America more than 125,000 Jewish emigrants who fled for their very lives from the dominions of the Tzar.

However, at the end of the long nightmare, the political horizon began to clear up. The tide of the liberty movement surged forward again and it looked as if the Russian people, and with it tormented Russian Jewry, would soon behold the new dawn. Yet the six million Jews of Russia were destined to pass through two more stormy years, standing between the firing lines of autocratic despotism and the revolutionary movement, and suffering the excruciating agonies of suspense, while hovering between degradation and emancipation.

CHAPTER XXXV

THE REVOLUTION OF 1905 AND THE FIGHT FOR EMANCIPATION

1. THE JEWS IN THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT

The "political spring," manifesting itself in the attempt of the Government, headed by Svyatopolk-Mirski, to establish friendly relations with the liberal elements of Russia, gave the first impetus to an open movement for political emancipation. The liberal "conspirators," who had hitherto been secretly dreaming of a constitution, gave public utterance to this tabooed aspiration. In November, 1904, the conference of Zemstvo workers, assembled in St. Petersburg, adopted a resolution pointing out "the anomaly of the political order" of Russia which is founded on autocracy and proclaiming the necessity of associating the representatives of the people in the work of legislation. About the same time, a large mass-meeting, which took the form of a public banquet, attended by lawyers and littérateurs, adopted a similar resolution calling for "the repeal of all national and denominational restrictions." Taking advantage of the temporary relaxation of police despotism, the press spoke up more boldly, while the better elements of the population began to organize themselves in all kinds of public bodies.

The Government was slow in making concessions, and harshly condemned the "boisterous assemblages" which called

for changes in "the unshakable foundations of our political order." Nevertheless, an imperial ukase, published on December 12, 1904, promised a number of partial reforms—improvement of the legal status of the peasantry, enlargement of the activities of the Zemstvos, the establishment of a state insurance for workingmen, relaxation of the severities of police and censorship, and likewise "a revision of the laws restricting the rights of aliens," with the retention of those provisions only "which are called forth by the genuine interests of the state and the manifest needs of the Russian people." It is almost needless to add that the latter clause held forth no promises to the Jews. For their disfranchisement could always be justified by "the genuine interests of the state"—a state built upon the foundations not of law, but of police force. The carrying into effect of the promised semi-reforms was entrusted to a bureaucratic body, the Committee of Ministers. The services of the popular representatives were repudiated.

The new movement for liberty forced further concessions from Russian officialdom, but these concessions could only be wrested from it in small doses and were granted only after a desperate resistance. The "bloody Sunday" of January 9, 1905, marked the beginning of the open revolution in which social, economic, and political demands were interwoven with one another. The demonstration of the striking workingmen of St. Petersburg, who marched in immense numbers to the Winter Palace to present a petition to the Tzar for economic and political reforms, ended in a tragedy. The petitioners who marched with crosses in their hands, under the leadership of the priest and demagogue Gapon, were received with a shower of bullets, resulting in a large number of victims

from among the participants in the demonstration, as well as from among the public. There were also several Jews among them—a first-aid nurse, a dentist, a pharmacy student and a journalist. This scandalous conduct of the Tzar, who replied with bullets to a peaceful appeal for reforms, led to a series of demonstrations, labor strikes, and terrorist acts in the provinces.

In the Western governments and in the Kingdom of Poland the Jews played a conspicuous rôle in the revolutionary movement, counting as they did a large number of organized workmen. In Odessa, a Jewish workingman by the name of Stillman fired at the Chief of Police and wounded him (January 19). In Moghilev, a Jewish youth made a vain attempt upon the life of the local Chief of Police who was accused of having instigated the pogrom which had taken place there in the fall of 1904. These incidents served in the hands of the reactionary Government—on January 9, Svyatopolk-Mirski had been dismissed for his excessive leaning toward liberalism—as an excuse for continuing its oppression of the Jews as the “ringleaders of the revolution.” The president of the Committee of Ministers, Witte, was the only one who advocated a different point of view. At the meeting of the Committee, held on February 11, he contended that “the hostile attitude toward the Government, now noticeable among the Jews, is due to the sad material conditions in which the bulk of Russian Jewry lives, being weighed down by the pressure of restrictive laws.” Witte prophesied that the police authorities would be bound “to fight with redoubled zeal against the anti-governmental activity of the Jews, until the amelioration of the

condition of the aliens, promised in the ukase of December 12, would be carried into effect."

2. THE STRUGGLE FOR EQUAL RIGHTS

Notwithstanding these pleas, the Government was slow in realizing even the moderate reforms which had been outlined in the imperial ukase. In the meantime the representatives of Russian Jewry had decided to place before it their own more comprehensive demands. In February, 1905, several mass petitions, demanding equal rights for Jews, were addressed to Witte. A petition signed by thirty-two Jewish communities—St. Petersburg, Vilna, Kovno, Homel, Berdychev, and others—began with these words:

The measures adopted for the last twenty-five years toward the Russian Jews were designed with the deliberate end in view to convert them into a mass of beggars, deprived of all means of sustenance, and of the light of education and human dignity. Consistency and comprehensiveness marked the system of oppression and violence which was skilfully planned and carefully executed The entire machinery of the state was directed to one end—that of making the life of the Jews in Russia impossible.

The petition repudiates the idea, voiced in the ukase of December 12, 1904, of a gradual amelioration of the position of the Jews, and of a few "mitigations"; for "the insulted dignity of man cannot be reconciled to half measures; it demands the complete removal of rightlessness."

All the Jews of Russia are permeated at the present moment by one thought: that the cruel system of endless restrictions and disabilities undermines the very basis of their existence, that it is impossible to continue such a life Worn out by all they have had to go through, and filled with grave anxiety about their future

destinies, the Jews are waiting at last for their entire enfranchisement; they are waiting for a radical repeal of all restrictive laws, so that, enjoying freedom and equality with all others, they may, shoulder to shoulder with the other citizens of this great country, work for its welfare and prosperity.

A memorandum couched in more resolute terms was sent by twenty-six Jewish communities—Moscow, Odessa, and others—and by the radical groups of the communities which had signed the first petition.

We declare—the memorandum states—that we look upon the attempt to satisfy and appease the Jewish population by any partial measures of improvement as doomed to failure. We expect equal rights, as human beings in whom the feeling of human dignity is alive, as conscious citizens in a modern body politic.

The memorandum of the Vilna community made the following addition to the last clause: "As a cultured nation, we demand the same rights of national-cultural self-determination which ought to be granted to all the nationalities that go to make up the Russian body politic."

Memorials and telegrams, addressed to the president of the Committee of Ministers, with the demand for equal rights, were also sent by many individual Jewish communities.

In the meantime, the general revolutionary movement in Russia proceeded apace. Professional organizations were springing into existence, such as the leagues of railroad workers, engineers, and lawyers. Here and there, huge railroad strikes were called. The college youth were in a state of ferment, and often went on strike. The agitation was answered by rifle shots and Cossack whips which were used to disperse the demonstrators. The extreme wing of the Socialist party resorted to terroristic acts. A tremendous sensation was caused

by the assassination of Grand Duke Sergius, the governor-general of Moscow (February 4), one of the most detestable members of the house of Romanov. The grand duke, whose name was bound up with the expulsion of tens of thousands of Jews from Moscow in 1891 and with the cruel oppression of the Jewish colony still left there, was the victim of a bomb thrown by a non-Jew, the Social-Revolutionist Kalayev.

The surging tide of the revolution intimidated Nicholas II., and wrested from him still another concession. On February 18, 1905, three enactments were published: an imperial manifesto condemning the revolutionary "unrest" at a time when "the sanguinary war in the Far East" was going on, and calling upon all "well-intentioned persons" to wage war against "the internal sedition." A rescript addressed to Bulyghin, Minister of the Interior, announced the decision of the Tzar "to invite the worthiest men, invested with the confidence of the nation and chosen by the population, to participate in the consideration of legislative projects"—in other words, a popular representation with merely consultative rights. Finally, an ukase addressed to the Senate granted permission to private persons and institutions to lay before the Government their "views and suggestions relating to the perfection of the well-being of the state."

The progressive elements of Russia were not in a mood to be reconciled to the duplicity of these enactments in which threats and concessions followed upon one another, or to the pettiness of the concessions in themselves. They took, however, full advantage of the permission to "lay" their views before the Government, and indulged in an avalanche of resolutions and declarations, demanding the substitution of a

parliamentary system of government for the existing system of autocracy. The Jewish institutions joined in this general campaign. The oldest Jewish organization, the "Society for the Diffusion of Enlightenment Among the Jews," in St. Petersburg, at a meeting, held on February 27, adopted the following resolution:

The proper organization of Jewish education such as would be in keeping with the social and cultural peculiarities of the Jewish people, will only be possible when the Jews will be placed on a footing of complete equality of rights with the rest of the Russian population. As a firm guarantee of the untrammelled cultural development and the complete equality of all nationalities, it is necessary that the legislative power and the administrative control of the country shall have the co-operation of popular representatives, to be elected upon the basis of the universal, direct, and secret vote of all citizens of the country, without any distinction of nationality, deaomination or calling.

The need of a non-partisan political organization to direct the struggle for Jewish emancipation which was to be waged by all classes of Jewry—outside the small fraction which had already been united in the labor organization of the "Bund"—was universally felt.

Such an organization was formed at the conference of public-spirited Jews which took place in Vilna at the end of March, 1905. It assumed the name of "The League for the Attainment of Equal Rights for the Jewish People in Russia," and proclaimed as its object "the realization to their full extent of the *civil, political, and national rights* of the Jewish people in Russia." The complete civil emancipation of the Jews, the assurance of their proportionate participation in the Russian popular representation, "the freedom of national-cultural self-

determination in all its manifestations," in the shape of "a comprehensive system of communal self-government, the freedom of language and school education"—such was the three-fold program of the League.

It was the first attempt of a Jewish organization in modern history to inscribe upon its banner not only the demand for the civil and political, but also for the national emancipation of the Jewish people, the first attempt to obtain liberty for Jewry as a nationality, and not as a mere denominational group, forming part of the dominant nation, as had been the case in Western Europe during the nineteenth century. The central bureau of the League was located in St. Petersburg, composed of twenty-two elective members, half of whom lived in the capital (M. Vinaver, G. Sliosberg, L. Bramson, and others), and the other half in the provinces (Dr. Shmaryahu Levin, S. M. Dubnow,¹ M. Ratner, and others).

The first resolutions adopted by the League were in substance as follows:

To demand universal suffrage at the elections to the future parliament, with a guarantee of proper representation for the national minorities; to influence the Russian public to the end that the general resolutions demanding equality for all citizens should contain an explicit reference to the emancipation of the Jews; to call upon all the Jewish aldermen in the municipal Dumas to resign their posts, in view of the fact that under the law of 1892, which had deprived the Jews of their franchise at the municipal elections,² these aldermen had not been elected by the Jewish population, but had been appointed by the administration—an act which implied an insult to the civic and national dignity of the Jewish people.

[¹ The author of the present volume, who resided in Vilna at that time.]

[² See vol. II, p. 246.]

The last-mentioned clause of this resolution, adopted at the first conference of the League, proved effective. In the majority of cities, the Jewish members of the municipal Dumas began to tender their resignations, by way of protest against the disfranchisement of the Jews in the municipal self-government. At first, the authorities were somewhat embarrassed and made an attempt to appoint other Jews in lieu of those that had resigned, but seeing that the Jewish boycott continued, they became "reconciled" to the entire absence of Jewish representatives in municipal self-government. The protest of the Jewish aldermen was drowned in the general noise of protests and demonstrations which filled the air during the revolutionary year.

3. THE "BLACK HUNDRED" AND THE "PATRIOTIC" POGROMS

In this wise did the Jewish people, though chafing under thralldom and well-nigh crushed by it, strive for the light of liberty. But the forces of reaction were preparing to wreak terrible vengeance upon the prisoner for his endeavor to throw off his bonds. As the revolutionary tide, which had engulfed the best elements of the Russian people, was rolling on, it clashed with the filthy wave of the Black Hundred, which the underlings of Tzardom had called to the surface from the lowest depths of the Russian underworld. *Acheronta movebo*¹—this threat was now carried out systematically by the Government of Nicholas II. in its struggle with the emancipatory movement. By letting loose the Russian "nether-world" against the liberal *intelligenza* and the Zhyds,

[¹ "I shall set the nether-world in motion."]

the reactionaries hoped to achieve three objects at once: to intimidate the liberals and revolutionaries; to demonstrate the unwillingness of the "people" to abolish autocracy in favor of constitutional government, and, finally, to discredit the entire revolutionary movement as "the work of Jewish hands." The latter end could, in the opinion of the reactionaries, be obtained best by convincing the Russian masses that "the enemies of Christ are the only enemies of the Tzar." An open anti-Jewish agitation was set in motion. Proclamations of the Black Hundred with the appeals, "Slay the students and the Zhyds!" "Remember Kishinev and Homel!" were scattered broadcast. The proclamation of the "Nationalist Society" of Kiev, Odessa, Kishinev, and other cities contained the following sentences:

The shouts "Down with autocracy!" are the shouts of those blood-suckers who call themselves Zhyds, Armenians, and Poles Be on your guard against the Zhyds! All the misfortunes in our lives are due to the Zhyds. Soon, very soon, the great time will come when there will be no Zhyds in Russia. Down with the traitors! Down with the constitution!

With the approaching Passover season, pogroms were openly organized. The papers were flooded with telegrams from many cities stating that riots were imminent. In some places the governors adopted measures to check the excesses of the savage crowd, but in many localities the pogroms were deliberately permitted or even directly engineered by the police. In the manufacturing city of Bialystok, the center of the Jewish labor movement, the Cossacks assaulted Jewish passers-by on the streets, invaded the synagogues and Jewish homes, cruelly maltreating their inmates and frequently searching them and

taking away their money (April 9-10). During the Passover holidays, peasants made an attack upon the Jews in the town of Dusyaty, in the government of Kovno, looting their property and beating those that dared to oppose them. In the city of Melitopol, in the government of Tavrida, an intoxicated mob demolished and set fire to Jewish stores, and thereupon started to attack the houses of Christians, but the self-defence consisting of Jewish and Christian young men checked the pogrom (April 18-19). In Simferopol, in the same government, the Black Hundred spread a rumor that a Jewish boy, the son of a pharmacist, had desecrated a Christian ikon. A pogrom was set in motion which met with the resistance of the armed Jewish youth and was afterwards checked by the troops (April 22).

The most terrible outbreak took place in Zhitomir. In this quiet center of Volhynia the progressive elements of both the Jewish and the Russian population revelled in the joy of their political honeymoon. As had been the case in other large cities, here, too, the "bloody Sunday" of January called forth political strikes on the part of the workingmen, demonstrations on the part of the college youth, and the circulation of revolutionary appeals. The fact that the movement was headed by the Jewish youth was enough to inspire the Black Hundred to embark upon their criminal task. All kinds of rumors were set afloat, such as that the Jews had been firing at the Tzar's portrait on the field behind the city, that they were preparing to slaughter the Christians, and other absurd stories. At the approach of Passover, the pogrom organizers summoned to their aid a group of "Katzaps," Great-Russian laborers, from Moscow. The Jews, anticipating the danger, began to

arm themselves in self-defence, and made their preparations openly. A clash between the "Black" and the "Red" was inevitable. It came in the form of a sanguinary battle which was fought on April 23-26, matching by its cruelty the pogrom at Homel, though exceeding it vastly by its dimensions.

In the course of three days, the city was in the hands of the black hordes who plundered, murdered and mutilated the Jews. They were fortified not only by quantities of alcohol, but also by the conviction that they were fighting for the Tzar against the "Sicilists,"¹ who clamored for "freedom" and a "republic." The Jewish self-defence performed prodigies of valor wherever they were not interfered with by the police and military, and died gallantly where the authorities actively assisted the savage work of the infuriated rioters. During the three pogrom days fifteen Jews were killed and nearly one hundred wounded, many of them severely. The casualties were mostly among young workingmen and handicraftsmen. But there were also some students among the victims, one of them a Christian, named Blinov, who stood up nobly for the assaulted Jews. The inhuman fiends fell upon Blinov, shouting: "Though you are a Russian, you are a Sicilist and worse than the Zhyds, now that you've come to defend them." The young hero was beaten to death, and the murderers were actively assisted by soldiers and policemen.

On one of those days, on April 25, a heart-rending tragedy took place in the town of Troyanov, in the government of Volhynia, not far from Zhitomir. Having learned of the massacre that was going on in Zhitomir, fourteen brave Jewish

¹ A mutilated form of "Socialists" which is in vogue among the ignorant Russian masses.

young men from the neighboring town of Chudnov armed themselves with cheap pistols, and proceeded to bring aid to their endangered fellow-Jews. On the way, while passing through Troyanov, they were met by a crowd of peasants and workingmen who had been aroused by a rumor that Jewish "slaughterers" were marching in order to exterminate the Russians. The infuriated mob fell upon the youths, and, in the presence of the local Jews, savagely killed ten of them, while the others were cruelly beaten. The following account of this ghastly occurrence was given by one of the survivors:

There were fourteen of us. We were on the way from Chudnov to Zhitomir. In Troyanov we were surrounded by Katzaps. They began to search us, taking away everything we had, and then started to beat us with hatchets and clubs. I saw my comrades fall down dead one after the other. Before the constabulary appeared, only four had remained alive, I and three other men. The constabulary ordered us to be carried to the hospital at Zhitomir, but on the way we were wrested by the Katzaps from the rural police and were tortured again I was roped and dragged to the priest. He begged that I should be left alone. The Katzaps made fun of him, dragged me out again, and started to beat me. The policemen began to tell them that "they would answer for me," since the constabulary had ordered them to get me to Zhitomir. "Well," said the Katzaps, "if that be the case, we will let him go, but before we do this, that hound of a Jew must have a look at his fellow-Zhyds." I was then dragged in an unconscious state to my comrades. I found myself in a pool of water. I had been drenched so as to make me regain consciousness. Then I beheld the dead bodies of my ten comrades No matter how long I may live, I shall never forget that sight One of them lay with his head chopped off; another with a ripped stomach cut off hands I fell into a swoon, and found myself here in this bed.

In the cemetery of Troyanov one may still behold the ten graves of the youthful martyrs who unselfishly went to the rescue of their brethren against beasts in human form, and were on the way torn to pieces by these beasts—ten graves which ought to become sacred to the entire Jewish people.

The Government reacted upon the Zhitomir massacre by an official communication in which the facts were deliberately garbled in order to prove that the Jews had called forth the pogrom by their conduct. It was alleged in this communication that, during their shooting exercises in the woods, the Jews had discharged their pistols at the portrait of the Tzar, had hurled insulting remarks at the police escort which was conveying a band of political prisoners, had issued a proclamation in the name of "the criminal party of the Social-Revolutionaries" in which the authorities of Zhitomir were accused of preparing the pogrom, and similar charges. The concrete object of the official communication is betrayed in its concluding part in which the governors are enjoined "to explain to the sober-minded section of the Jewish population that, in the interest of the safety of the Jewish masses, it is in duty bound to inspire their coreligionists who have been drawn into the political struggle with the consciousness of the absolute necessity of refraining from arousing by their behavior the hatred of the Christian population against them." Translated into plain terms, the Government order meant: "If you do not wish to have pogroms and massacres, then keep your hands off the liberty movement; but if you will persist in playing a part in it, then the Christian population will make short work of you, dealing with you as with enemies of the Fatherland."

Caught in the general revolutionary conflagration which flared up with particular violence in the summer of 1905, after the destruction of the Russian fleet by the Japanese near Tsushima, the Jews reacted upon the pogroms by intensifying their revolutionary activity and swelling the number of self-defence organizations. Russian Jewry played an active part in the two wings of the emancipation army, the Constitutional-Democratic as well as the Social-Democratic party, and was represented even in the extreme wing occupied by the Social-Revolutionaries. The majority of these Jewish revolutionaries were actuated by general Russian aspirations, and were often entirely oblivious of the national interests of Judaism. This, however, did not prevent the henchmen of the Tzar from visiting the "sin" of the revolution upon the Jewish masses. A vicious circle was the result of this policy: As victims of the old despotism, the Jews naturally threw in their lot with the revolution which promised to do away with it; thereupon uncivilized Russia vented its fury upon them by instituting pogroms which, in turn, pushed them more and more into the ranks of the revolution.

During the summer months of 1905, a new succession of pogroms took place, this time of the military variety. Wrought up over the defeats of the Russian army in Manchuria, and roused by the vile proclamations of the Black Hundred which pictured the Jews as the inner enemy, soldiers and Cossacks began to wreak their vengeance upon this inner enemy, assaulting and killing or wounding Jews on the streets of Minsk (May 26), Brest-Litovsk (May 29-31), Syedletz and Lodz (June 9). In the first three cities, the soldiers plundered and murdered only the Jews. In Lodz, they fired at a mixed Polish-

Jewish demonstration of workingmen. A regular butchery was engineered by the soldiery in Bialystok (June 30). During the entire day, the city resounded with the rifle shots of maddened soldiers who were firing into peaceful Jewish crowds. Fifty dead and a still larger number of wounded were the result of these military exploits.

During the same time a regularly organized pogrom occurred in the southern outskirts of Russia, in the city of Kerch, in the Crimea. On July 27, a peaceful political demonstration of the kind then generally in vogue took place in that city; among the participants were also the Jewish youth. By way of protest, the city-governor and gendarmerie chief organized a "patriotic" counter-demonstration, which was held a few days later, on July 31. Carrying a banner with the portrait of the Tzar and singing the Russian national hymn, the "patriotic" hordes, with the notorious local thieves and hooligans as the predominating element, sacked Jewish houses and stores, and, in the name of patriotism, looted Jewish property—even the so-called respectable public participating in the latter act. When the armed Jewish self-defence began to oppose the rioters, they were scattered by a volley from the soldiers, ten of them being killed on the spot. The subsequent inquiry established the fact that the pogrom had been fully prepared by the police and gendarmerie authorities, which had been in telegraphic communication in regard to it with the Police Department in St. Petersburg. It was a rehearsal of the monstrous October pogroms which were to take place a few months later.

4. THE JEWISH FRANCHISE

In the midst of the noise caused by the revolution on the one hand and by the pogroms on the other, the question of popular representation, promised in the ukase of February 18, 1905, was discussed in the highest Government spheres of Russia. A committee, which met under the chairmanship of M. Bulyghin, was drafting a scheme of a consultative popular assembly; as far as the Jews were concerned, it was proposed to exclude them from the franchise, on the ground that the latter would not be compatible with their civil disfranchisement. This proposition, which was in entire accord with the general reactionary trend of Russian politics, called forth a storm of indignation in all circles of Russian Jewry. During the month of June protest resolutions against the contemplated measure were adopted by the Jewish communities of St. Petersburg, Riga, Kishinev, Bobruisk, Zhitomir, Nicholayev, Minsk, Vitebsk, Vilna, and other cities. Many resolutions were couched in violent terms betraying the outraged sentiments of Russian Jewry. As an illustration, the following extract from the Vilna resolution may be quoted:

In the proposed scheme of popular representation, we Jews, a cultured nation of six millions, are placed below the semi-savage aliens of Eastern Russia. The policy of pacification applied to other suppressed nationalities has given way to a policy of terrorization when the Jews are concerned. The mad system, consisting in the endeavor to irritate and infuriate the Jews by mediæval persecutions and thereupon wreak vengeance on them for the manifestation of that irritation, has now reached its climax We appeal to the Russian people, which is now called upon to renovate the antiquated political structure of the country We are of the hope that the malign vindictiveness toward the Jews

on the part of the retiring bureaucracy, which is eager to carry over the ferments of corruption into the healthy atmosphere of the future popular representation, will not be realized.

Professor Trubetzky, who waited upon the Tzar on June 6, at the head of a combined deputation of Zemstvos and municipalities, pointed out in his famous speech that no one should be excluded from popular representation: "It is important that there should not be any disfranchised and disinherited." The Government was shaken in its resolution, and the Council of Ministers eliminated from the Bulyghin project the clause barring the Jews from voting, justifying this step by the undesirability "to irritate the Jews still further."

The Jewish question was also touched upon in the conferences at Peterhof, which were held during the month of July under the chairmanship of the Tzar, to formulate plans for an Imperial Duma. Naryshkin, a reactionary dignitary, demanded that "the dangerous Jewish nation" be barred from the Duma. But a number of other dignitaries—the Minister of Finance, Kokovtzev, the Assistant-Minister of the Interior, Trepov, and Obolenski and Chikhachev, members of the Council of State—advocated their admission, and the discussions were terminated by the brief remark of the Tzar: "The project [with the insertion of the Council of Ministers in favor of the Jews] shall be left unaltered."

By this action, the Government made itself guilty of a flagrant inconsistency. It conferred upon the Jews the highest political privilege—the right of voting for popular representatives—but left them at the same time in a state of complete civil disfranchisement, even with regard to such elementary liberties as the right of domicile, the right of

transit, and so on. Only one month previously, on June 8, the Tzar had approved the "Opinion" of the Committee of Ministers—in pursuance of the ukase of December 12, 1904, the Committee had been busy discussing the Jewish problem—to the effect that the consideration of the question of ameliorating the condition of the Jews should be deferred until the convocation of the new Parliament. Evidently, the anti-Jewish conscience of the Tzar made it impossible for him to grant even the slightest relief to the Jews who from pariahs had been turned into revolutionaries.

CHAPTER XXXVI

THE COUNTER-REVOLUTION AND THE OCTOBER MASSACRES

1. THE FIENDISH DESIGNS OF THE "BLACK HUNDRED"

Soon afterwards, on August 6, 1905, the so-called "Bulyghin Constitution" was made public, providing for a truncated Imperial Duma with a system of representation based on class qualifications and limited to advisory functions but without any restrictions as far as the franchise of the Jews was concerned. "Now," wrote the *Voskhod*, "the Jew has the right to be a popular representative, but he has no right to reside in the place in which the Imperial Duma assembles—in the capital." Russian Jewry, with the exception of its Left wing, was on the point of starting an election campaign to send its representatives to this mutilated Duma, in the hope of attaining through it to a more perfect form of representation, when the stormy course of events brought to the fore new threatening questions. This counterfeit of a national parliament failed to satisfy the Russian democracy, and the struggle with the Government broke out anew with unprecedented energy. Stormy political meetings were held at the universities and at the other institutions of higher learning, which, by an ukase of August 27, had been granted academic self-government. The autonomous professorial councils began to admit Jewish students to the schools, without any restrictive percentage, and the wave of an agitated Jewish youth was drawn into the whirling sea of the Russian student body.

A new succession of strikes followed, arranged by the students, workingmen, and railroad workers. A general Russian strike was being carefully prepared as a last resort in the struggle for a democratic constitution. The army of the emancipation movement was instituting a bloodless revolution, the temporary stoppage of all railroad movements and of all other activities in the country, in the hope of forcing Tzardom to an act of self-abnegation and the proclamation of civil liberties.

The month of September and the beginning of October were spent in these feverish preparations, but at the same time, the black army of absolutism was making its own arrangements for a sanguinary counter-revolution, for regular St. Bartholomew nights, directed against the participants in the emancipation movement, and particularly against the Jews. The plans of the emancipation army were universally known, but the terrible designs of the dark forces of reaction were effectively concealed. Only when the bloody undertaking was accomplished, was it possible to uncover the threads of the criminal pogrom organization, which led from the palaces of the Tzar and the highest dignitaries of state, by way of the Police Department, to the slums of murderers and hooligans. In the disclosures made by Lvov, in November, 1905, in his memorandum to Witte, the president of the Council of Ministers, the officials in the immediate environment of Nicholas II. who had organized the October pogroms were pointed out by name. They were the "patriotic" General Bogdanovich in St. Petersburg, who acted with the blessing of Archbishop¹ Vladimir and with the as-

[¹ In Russian, *Mitropolit*, the highest ecclesiastical dignity in the Greek-Orthodox Church. There are three Mitropolits in Russia, residing in Petrograd, Moscow, and Kiev.]

sistance of the Imperial camarilla and of many governors and governors-general in the provinces. During the month of September "fighting contingents" of the Black Hundred, whose number, as Bogdanovich boasted in the highest government spheres, amounted to one hundred thousand, were organized all over Russia. In every city the parts to be enacted by the administrators, the police and the pogrom hirelings from among the local riff-raff were carefully prepared and assigned. The pogrom proclamations were printed openly; the "manufacturing" center of this propaganda literature, as was afterwards disclosed in the Imperial Duma by deputy Urussov (formerly Assistant-Minister of the Interior), was located in the printing office of the Police Department. There can be no question that the Tzar was acquainted, if not with all the details of these preparations, at least with the general plan of arranging a counter-revolution by means of carefully engineered massacres of which the Jews were to become the chief victims. Millions of rubles for the organization of the pogroms were appropriated from a secret ten-million ruble fund, the disposition of which lay entirely in the hands of the Tzar.

Such were the conditions which ushered in the month of October, 1905. The first days of the month saw the beginning of the railroad strike; by the middle of the month it had already seized the entire country, accompanied in the industrial centers by a general strike in all lines of productive endeavor. In many cities, collisions took place between the revolutionaries and the military. At first, the Government made an attempt to resort to threats, and all over Russia rang the blood-thirsty cry of the Chief of Police Trepov: "No cartridges shall be spared!" But at the last moment, autocracy recoiled before

the revolutionary tempest and gave way. On October 17, an imperial manifesto was issued, solemnly promising to bestow all civil liberties upon the Russian people—inviolability of person, freedom of conscience, liberty of speech, assemblage and organization, and a legislative Duma in which the representatives of all classes of the population were to have a voice. The manifesto made no mention, however, of the equality of all citizens before the law or of the bestowal of equal rights on the various nationalities, and even in the accompanying memorandum of Premier Witte, the author of the enactment of October 17, the subject was disposed of in a few nebulous phrases.

Nevertheless, even in this hazy form, the manifesto made a tremendous impression. Everybody believed that autocratic Tzardom had been vanquished by the army of liberty and that Russia had been finally converted from a state founded on police force into a body politic based on law. But, on the day following, all these hopes were cruelly shattered. On October 18, in hundreds of cities the carefully concealed army of counter-revolutionaries, evidently obeying a prearranged signal, crawled out from beneath the ground, to indulge in an orgy of blood, lasting a full week (October 18-25), which in its horrors finds no parallel in the entire history of humanity.

2. THE RUSSIAN ST. BARTHOLOMEW NIGHT

The principal victims of this protracted St. Bartholomew night were the new Huguenots of the emancipation movement—the Jews. They were to pay the penalty for having assisted in wresting from the despotic Government the manifesto with its promise of liberties. In the course of one week,

nearly fifty anti-Jewish pogroms, accompanied by bloodshed, took place in various cities (Odessa, Kiev, Kishinev, Kalarash, Simferopol, Romny, Kremenchug, Chernigov, Nicholayev, Yekaterinoslav, Kamenetz-Podolsk, Yelisavetgrad, Orsha, etc.), in addition to several hundred "bloodless" pogroms, marked in regular fashion by the destruction of property, plunder, and incendiarism. The pogroms directed against the Christian participants in the emancipation movement, such as intellectuals, students, etc., in Tver, Tomsk, and other interior Russian cities, amounted in all to a score or two. This disproportion alone shows the direction in which the organized dark forces were active. The strict uniformity and consistency in the carrying out of the counter-revolutionary conspiracy was too palpable to be overlooked.

The customary procedure was as follows: In connection with the manifesto of October 17, the progressive elements would arrange a street procession, frequently adorned by the red flags of the left parties and accompanied by appropriate acclamations and speeches expressive of the new liberty. Simultaneously, the participants in the "patriotic demonstration"—consisting mostly of the scum of society, of detectives and police officials in plain clothes—would emerge from their nooks and crannies, carrying the portrait of the Tzar under the shadow of the national flag, singing the national hymn and shouting, "Hurrah, beat the Zhyds! The Zhyds are eager for liberty. They go against our Tzar to put a Zhyd in his place." These "patriotic" demonstrators would be accompanied by police and Cossack patrols (or soldiers), ostensibly to preserve order, but in reality to enable the hooligans to attack and maltreat the Jews and prevent the victims from defending

themselves. As soon as the Jews assembled for self-defence, they would be driven off by the police and troops. Thereupon, the "patriotic" demonstrators and the accomplices, joining them on the way, would break up into small bands and disperse all over the city, invading Jewish houses and stores, ruin, plunder, beat, and sometimes slaughter entire families.

The most terrible pogrom took place in Odessa. It lasted fully four days. The rioters were openly assisted by the police and troops, and were encouraged by the active support of city-governor Neidthart, and the criminal inactivity of the military governor, Kaulbars. The heroism displayed by the Jewish self-defence was strong enough to beat off the hooligans, but it was powerless to defeat the troops and police. Over three hundred dead, thousands of wounded or crippled Jews, among them many who lost their minds from the horrors, one hundred and forty widows, five hundred and ninety-three orphans, and more than forty thousand Jews materially ruined—such were the results of the battle which was fought against the Jews of Odessa during October 18-21.

Approximately along the same lines the pogrom campaign was conducted in scores of other cities, with a few lurid departures from the customary ritual, as, for instance, in Nyezhin, in the government of Chernigov, where the Jewish community, headed by the rabbi, was forced by the rioters, under the pain of death, to pronounce publicly the oath of allegiance to the Tzar. As a rule the pogroms which occurred in hundreds of cities, towns, and villages, were limited to the destruction of property, although even in small localities, such as in Semyonovka, in the government of Chernigov, the riots were occasionally accompanied by massacres. It may be added

that the outbreaks were not confined to the Pale of Settlement. In a number of cities outside the Pale, such as in Saratov, Voronyezh, and other places with a small Jewish population, the Jewish communities were ruthlessly attacked.

Contemporary history is not yet in a position to depict all the horrors which were perpetrated upon the Jews in Russia in the latter half of October, 1905, or to trace with any amount of accuracy their underlying causes. Let us draw a veil over this bloody spectacle. There will come a time when the world will shudder on learning the truth about the bloody happenings and about the real culprits of this prolonged Bartholomew night at the beginning of the twentieth century.

The sinister counter-revolution which broke out on October 17, the day on which the manifesto of the Tzar was promulgated, threatened to drag the revolution into the abyss of anarchy. All were profoundly aroused by the perfidious Byzantine policy of Nicholas II., who with one hand waved the peace banner before the progressive section of the Russian people, and with the other plunged a knife into its heart—a knife which most of all was to slash Jewry. Not only the parties of the extreme Left, but even the Constitutionists who were willing to accept the promises of the October manifesto, had little faith in their ultimate realization. A reign of chaos ensued. The parties of the Left demanded now a democratic, now even a social, republic. The political and labor strikes, among them those arranged by the Jewish "Bund," assumed the character of anarchy. The peasant or agrarian movement burst forth, accompanied by the burning of manors and estates. Poland and the Baltic region were in the throes of terrorism. Moscow witnessed an armed uprising with barricades and with all the paraphernalia of a

popular revolution (December, 1905). The Government quelled the Moscow rebellion, and resolutely adopted a policy of repression. Arrests, executions, punitive military expeditions, were the means by which the program of the Witte-Durnovo Cabinet was to be carried into effect.

The reactionary camarilla around the Tzar operated in full force, fanning the hatred against the Jews. On December 23, the Tzar received a deputation of the ringleaders of the Black Hundred, who had organized themselves in the "League of the Russian People." One of the speeches appealing to the Tzar to preserve autocracy was devoted to the Jewish question. The deputation begged the Tzar "not to give equal rights to the Jews." To this Nicholas replied laconically: "I shall think it over."

3. THE UNDAUNTED STRUGGLE FOR EQUAL RIGHTS

The terrible October calamities were faced by Russian Jewry in a spirit of courage and fortitude. It stood alone in its sorrow. The progressive elements of Russian society which were themselves in the throes of a great crisis reacted feebly upon the sufferings of the Jewish people which had become the scape-goat of the counter-revolution. The indifference of the outside world, however, was counteracted by the rise of the Jewish national sentiment among the better classes of Russian Jewry. One month after the pogrom bacchanalia, the "League for the Attainment of Equal Rights for the Jewish People" held its second convention in St. Petersburg. The Convention which lasted four days (November 22-25) gave public utterance to the feeling of profound national indignation. It voted down the motion to send a deputation to Count Witte, asking

for the immediate grant of equal rights to the Jews. In the resolution repudiating this step the policy of the Government was characterized in these words:

The facts have incontrovertibly proved that the recent pogroms, appalling by their dimensions and by the number of their victims, have been staged with the open connivance and, in many cases, with the immediate assistance and sometimes even under the direction of the police and highest local administration; that the Government, not at all abashed by the monstrous crimes of its executive organs, the local representatives of State authority, has not removed from office a single one of the suspected functionaries, and has taken no measures to bring them to justice.

In view of the fact that Count Witte has repeatedly stated that the Government does not see its way clear to proclaim at the present moment the emancipation of the Jews, supposedly in the interest of the Jews themselves, against whom the agitation of the popular masses might be intensified by such a measure, whereas, in reality, the pogroms are a result of that very rightlessness of the Jews which is fully realized by the masses of the Russian people and by the so-called Black Hundred—the Convention resolves that the sending of a deputation to Count Witte and the entering into negotiations with him will achieve no purpose, and that, instead, all efforts shall be concentrated upon organizing Russian Jewry in the struggle for its equality of citizenship by joining the ranks of the general movement for liberty.

Imbued with the spirit of martyrdom, the Convention remembered the martyr Dashevski, the avenger of the Kishinev massacre,¹ and passed a resolution to convey to the youthful sufferer, who was then languishing in a penal military company, its "enthusiastic greetings."

[¹ See above, p. 81.]

In an outburst of national enthusiasm the Convention adopted the following bold resolution:

In the interest of realizing to their full extent the civil, political, and national rights of the Jewish nationality in Russia, the Convention resolves as follows:

To proceed without delay to call, on the basis of universal and equal suffrage, without discrimination of sex, and by a direct secret vote, an All-Russian Jewish National Assembly in order to establish, in accordance with the will of the entire Jewish population, the forms and principles of its national self-determination as well as the foundations of its internal organization.

It was the project of a national Synedrion, radically different in its conception from the Napoleonic Synedrion convened in 1807.

The third convention of the "League of Equal Rights" was held on February 10-13, 1906, during the election campaign to the first Imperial Duma. The proposal of the Left wing of the League to boycott the Duma, on the ground that it "will prove a bulwark of reaction"—a prediction which was fully justified by events—and to refrain from taking part in the elections, was voted down. On the contrary, a resolution was passed, calling upon the Jews to take a most active part in the elections, to nominate everywhere their own Jewish candidates, and, wherever this was impossible, to give their votes to the non-Jewish candidates on condition that they pledge themselves to support in the Duma the civil, political, and national rights of the Jewish people. The resolution, moreover, contained this clause: "To insist that the Jewish question in the Duma shall be settled unconditionally in connection with the fundamental articles of the Constitution and with the questions of elementary liberties to be granted to all citizens."

An election campaign was set in motion and carried on under the most difficult circumstances. The police authorities took advantage of the state of war which had been proclaimed in many places to interfere with a comprehensive pre-election propaganda, and at the same time the Black Hundred tried to intimidate the Jews by holding out the menace of pogroms during the approaching Passover season. In Poland, the anti-Semitic chauvinists threatened the Jews with all possible reprisals for their "audacious intention" to nominate their own candidates for the Duma, alongside of the candidates of the Christian Poles. Simultaneously, the Jewish group of the Left, the "Bund" and others, followed the policy of boycotting the Duma and did their best to interfere with the elections. However, all these apprehensions proved groundless. The Passover and election pogroms did not take place, and Russian Jewry displayed a vigorous activity in the elections, with the result that twelve Jewish deputies were sent to the first Duma. The most active among these deputies were M. Vinaver, one of the leaders of the general Russian Constitutional-Democratic party and president of the "League for the Attainment of Equal Rights"; Dr. Shmaryahu Levin, the well-known Zionist; L. Bramson, actively identified with Jewish educational activities, who was affiliated with the Russian Democratic group, known as the *Trudoviki*, or "Laborites." All the Jewish deputies were united on the nationalistic platform formulated by the "League for the Attainment of Equal Rights." By a resolution passed at the fourth Convention of the League, held on May 9-13, 1906, they pledged themselves to co-ordinate their actions in all questions pertaining to Jewish emancipation and to abide by a common discipline, without, however, forming a separate parliamentary fraction.

4. THE JEWISH QUESTION BEFORE THE FIRST DUMA

The first Duma was convened on April 27, 1906, and barely three months later, on July 8, it was dissolved, or rather dispersed by the Tzar, for having displayed a spirit of excessive opposition. The prevailing element in the first Duma was the Constitutional-Democratic majority to which, by their political sympathies, the bulk of Russian Jewry and ten of its twelve representatives in the Duma—the other two stood a little more to the Left—belonged. It was natural for the Jews to expect that a Parliament of this complexion would have no difficulty in solving the question of equal rights for the Jews as one of the most fundamental prerequisites of civil liberty. Unfortunately, this expectation was not justified. The entire brief session of the Duma was spent in an uninterrupted struggle of the Opposition with the unscrupulous Government which was then headed by Goremykin, a hide-bound reactionary. True, in its reply to the speech from the throne, the Duma declared that "neither liberty nor order can be firmly established without the equality of all citizens before the law." But in the pronouncement of the Government of May 13 no word was said about this equality of citizenship. The Jewish deputy Vinaver delivered a powerful speech, in which, among other things, he spoke as follows:

From this platform, from which so much has been said about political liberties, we Jews, the representatives of one of the most tortured nationalities in the land, have not uttered a single word about ourselves, because we did not consider it seemly to speak here of civil inequality Now, however, it is becoming clear to us that the Government has made up its mind to continue on the same road on which it has gone until now, and we are, therefore, bound to declare that, so long as you will connive at civil slavery, there will be no peace in the land.

The mistake made by the Jewish deputies consisted just in the fact that they had not "uttered a single word" about themselves on a former occasion, in reply to the speech from the Throne which had equally failed to make the slightest mention of civil equality—practically affecting only the Jews—and that they did not utter that word with that feeling of righteous indignation to which the representatives of "the most tortured nationality" in Russia were morally entitled.

Later on, the debates in the Duma concerning the Jewish question were, by the force of events, concentrated upon the pogrom policy of the Government. On May 8 an interpellation was introduced regarding the complicity of the Imperial Police Department in instigating the pogroms of 1905. Stolypin, the Minister of the Interior, promised to reply to the interpellation, which was substantiated by documentary evidence, a month later. But before that term had elapsed a new sanguinary pogrom broke out in Bialystok.

In this center of the Jewish revolutionary and labor movement, where, in 1905, the police and troops had already twice staged a Jewish massacre, a new conspiracy was being hatched by the police and military against "the authors of the liberty movement." An accidental act of terrorism, the assassination of the Chief of Police by an unknown culprit, gave the police conspirators a proper occasion to execute their terrible design. On June 1, during a church procession, a pistol was discharged by an *agent provocateur* from among the Black Hundred, and at once a rumor spread like wildfire among the crowd that "the Jewish anarchists are firing at the Christians." The pogrom flared up on the spot. In the course of two days the mob was busy demolishing Jewish houses and stores and attacking the Jews, while at the same time the

police and military were systematically firing at the Jews not only on the streets but also in the houses, in which the unfortunate tried to hide. The bestialities of Kishinev were enacted again. Entire families were slaughtered, human beings were tortured, and hacked to pieces; limbs were cut off from the body, nails driven into the heads. . . . Eighty dead and hundreds of wounded Jews were the result of this new exploit of the counter-revolutionaries.

On June 2, the Imperial Duma received the heart-rending news of the Bialystok massacre, and right there, after the passionate speeches of Dr. Levin, Rodichev, and other deputies, passed a resolution to bring in an interpellation to be answered by the Government within a fixed date, and to appoint a parliamentary commission which was to investigate the events on the spot. Three Duma deputies left at once for Bialystok, and on their return submitted to the Duma an unvarnished account which incontrovertibly established the fact that the Bialystok crime had been carefully prepared as a counter-revolutionary act, and that the peaceful Jewish population had been pitilessly shot down by the police and soldiery.

On June 5, three days after the appearance of the bloody spectre of Bialystok in the Duma hall, a bill dealing with civil equality for the Jews came up for discussion. The burning problem involving the disfranchisement of six million human beings was discussed side by side with the question of a few petty class discriminations and with the entirely separate question of women's rights. The entire treatment of the subject by the deputies showed a distinct lack of warm-hearted sympathy. Only the speech of the Jewish deputy Levin reverberated with indignation, when he reminded the Russian Assembly that he himself, being a Jew, would in ordinary times be denied the

right of residence in the capital, and that, as soon as the Duma would be dissolved, he, a representative of the people and a former legislator, would be evicted from St. Petersburg by the police. The bill was referred to a committee to receive its final shape.

After an interval of three days, on June 8, the Duma had again occasion to discuss the subject of pogroms. Premier Stolypin replied to the interpellation of May 8 concerning the complicity of the Government in the pogrom of 1905. His lame attempt to exonerate the authorities called forth a strong rebuttal from a former member of the Government, the erstwhile Assistant-Minister of the Interior, Deputy Urussov, who bravely disclosed the full truth. Fortified by documentary evidence, he proved the existence of a secret printing-press in the Police Department which was issuing "patriotic" proclamations calling upon the populace to exterminate the Jews. He quoted the words of the gendarmerie officer who was in charge of that particular activity: "A pogrom may be arranged on whatever scale you please, whether it be against ten people or against ten thousand," and he concluded his speech with these words: "The danger will not disappear, so long as the affairs of the state and the destinies of the land will be subject to the influence of people who, by their training, are corporals and policemen, and by their convictions pogrom makers." These words were accompanied by a storm of applause, and the Government bench was showered with cries, "Resign, you pogrom fiends!" The Duma finally adopted a resolution echoing these cries of indignation.

A more passionate tone characterized the discussions of the Duma during the days of June 23-26, in connection with the report of the parliamentary commission which had been ap-

pointed to investigate the Bialystok massacre. The Duma was scandalized by the lying official communication, in which the Jews were put forward as the authors of the pogrom, and by the shameful military order of the day, in which the troops of the Bialystok garrison were thanked "for their splendid services during the time of the pogrom." The speeches delivered by the Jewish deputies, by Jacobson, who had visited Bialystok as one of the members of the parliamentary commission, and by Vinaver and Levin, gave vent to their burning national wrath. The Russian Mirabeau, Rodichev, pilloried the highly placed instigators of the Bialystok butchery. On July 7, the Duma concluded the debate by adopting a resolution denouncing in violent terms the policy of the Government, a policy of oppression, frightfulness and extermination, which had created "a situation unprecedented in the history of civilized countries," and demanding, moreover, the immediate resignation of the reactionary Ministry.

5. THE SPREAD OF ANARCHY AND THE SECOND DUMA

Two days later, when the deputies appeared before the Duma, they found the building closed, and on the doors was displayed an imperial manifesto dissolving the Duma which "has encroached upon a domain outside its jurisdiction, and has engaged in investigating the acts of the authorities appointed by us." The sudden dissolution of the Duma was answered by the "Vyborg Manifesto" which was signed by the entire parliamentary Opposition, calling upon the people to refuse to pay taxes to furnish soldiers to a Government which had driven asunder their representatives. The manifesto was also signed by all the Jewish deputies who subsequently had to pay for it with imprisonment and the loss of their electoral rights.

The revolutionary terrorism which had subsided during the sessions of the Duma broke out with redoubled violence after its dissolution. Attempts upon the lives of high officials—the most terrible being the explosion of a bomb in the summer residence of Stolypin, who had been appointed Prime Minister at the dissolution of the Duma—"expropriations," *i. e.*, the plunder of state funds and private moneys for revolutionary purposes, anarchistic labor strikes, were the order of the day. The Government retorted with monstrous measures of oppression. A political court-martial was instituted which, in the course of five months (September, 1906–January, 1907) sentenced over one thousand people to death, among them many who were innocent or under age. Needless to say, a considerable portion of these victims were Jews.

Yet as far as the revolutionary attitude of the Jewish population was concerned, the Government was not satisfied to cope with it by "legal" executions, and therefore resorted, in addition, to the well-tried contrivance of wholesale executions, in other words, of pogroms. The chief of the political police in the city of Syedletz, Tikhanovich, engineered on August 27-28 a bloody military pogrom in that city, netting thirty dead and more than one hundred and fifty wounded Jews. The signal for the pogrom were shots fired at a sentry by an *agent provocateur*, whereupon the troops started an aimless musketry fire on the streets and even bombarded Jewish houses with grenades. Many soldiers, in a state of intoxication, committed incredible barbarities and looted Jewish property. Notwithstanding the official report of another agent of the local political police, Captain Pyetukhov, in which he asserted that the Jews had not given the slightest reason for the butchery and that the latter had been entirely engineered by the military and political

authorities, the perpetrator of the pogrom, Tikhanovich, was not only allowed to go unpunished, but received from the governor-general of Warsaw an expression of thanks for his "energy and executive skill."

This being the attitude of the ruling spheres of Russia, it was out of the question to expect any initiative from that quarter in regard to the solution of the Jewish question. The Government of Stolypin, in a circular issued on August 24, 1906, had promised "to find out without delay which restrictions, being a source of irritation and manifestly obsolete, could be immediately repealed, and which others, affecting basically the relationship of the Jewish nationality to the native population, seem to be a matter of popular conscience, and should therefore be referred to the legislative institutions." The Council of Ministers laid before the Tzar a draft of moderate reforms in favor of the Jews, pointing to the necessity of appeasing the Jews who, as a result of their grievous restrictions, "had been forced to carry on a desperate struggle against the existing order." But these representations had no effect. Nicholas II. is reported to have said on that occasion: "So long as I am Tzar, the Zhyds of Russia shall not have equal rights." During that time, the power of the so-called "Second Government," the horrible camarilla around the Tzar, was in the ascendancy, and their mainstay were the Black Hundred now organized in the reactionary "League of the Russian People." These reactionary terrorists knew only of one way to solve the Jewish question—by exterminating the Jews.

There was only one ray of hope left—the second Duma which was to be convoked in February, 1907. The election campaign was carried on under Government pressure and was hampered

by the threat of reprisals and pogroms on the part of the "Black." The elections resulted in a Duma with an anomalous complexion. The two extreme wings, the Socialists and Black Hundred, had gained in strength, whereas the Constitutional Democratic center had been weakened. The Jews had managed to elect only three deputies, apart from one Jewish Social-Democrat who ran on the ticket of his party. They were men of little renown, whereas of the deputies of the first Duma who were prosecuted for signing the Vyborg Manifesto not one was elected.

The entire energy of the new Parliament spent itself in the struggle between its left and right wing. The Jewish question was entirely relegated to the "Committee on the Freedom of Conscience." The Government had brought in a bill repealing all denominational restrictions, "except those affecting the Jews," but the Committee decided to eliminate this discriminating clause and in this manner carry through the emancipation of the Jews under the guise of the "Freedom of Conscience."

But this time, too, the hope for Jewish emancipation proved an illusion. The Duma was soon dissolved, under the pretext that a revolutionary conspiracy of the Socialistic deputies had been uncovered. On June 3, 1907, another *coup d'état* took place. The former electoral law which made it possible for the Russian democracy and the oppressed nationalities to send their representatives to the Duma was arbitrarily changed by the Tzar in order to insure a conservative pro-Government majority in the Russian parliament. There followed an era of dismal reaction.

CHAPTER XXXVII

EXTERNAL OPPRESSION AND INTERNAL CONSOLIDATION

1. THE NEW ALIGNMENTS WITHIN RUSSIAN JEWRY

The terrible quattuennium of 1903-1906 had an extraordinarily quickening effect upon the national and political thought of the classes as well as of the masses of Russian Jewry. The year of Kishinev and Homel, when the rightless Jews were made defenceless; the year of the Russo-Japanese War, when these rightless and defenceless pariahs were called upon to fight for their fatherland against the enemy from without; the year of the revolution when after the sanguinary struggle for liberty the Jews received a "constitutional charter wrapped up in pogroms"; finally, the first year of the Duma when indignant utterances of the Jewish deputies from the platform of the Duma were accompanied by the moans of the wounded Jews of Bialystok—these terrible upheavals might have proved fatal to Russian Israel had it not, during the preceding period, worked out for itself a definite *nationalistic* attitude towards the non-Jewish world. There were several varieties of this national-political formula. At the one pole stood Zionism, with its theory of a new "exodus." At the other pole was the Social-Democratic party with its premise that "the blood of the Jew must serve as lubricating oil upon the wheels of the Russian Revolution." But even these two poles came somewhat closer to one another at the moment of the great national

danger, converging, in spite of all their differences in program and tactics, toward the central line above which floated the banner proclaiming the fight for the civil, political, and national rights of the Jewish people. Disfranchised, battered by pogroms, victimized by tyrannous Tzardom, the Jews of Russia never thought of degrading themselves to the point of begging equal rights "in instalments." They demanded their rights in full, and demanded them not merely as "the Jewish *population*," but as the Jewish *people*, as an autonomous nation among other nations with a culture of its own. The doctrine of "National-Cultural Autonomism"¹ was crystallized in definite slogans. These slogans were proclaimed, as we have seen, by the "League for the Attainment of Equal Rights for the Jewish People," which united on its platform all political Jewish groups, with the exception of the Social-Democratic partisans.

The years of storm and stress also forced Zionism to recede from its original position of denying the possibility of a national struggle in the Diaspora. Meeting during the most exciting days of the Russian Revolution, the Seventh Zionist Congress at Basle, held in July, 1905, mourned the loss of its prematurely cut-off leader, Theodor Herzl, and adopted a resolution voicing its strict allegiance to the Palestine idea and rejecting the temptations of Territorialism. This led to a formal split within the party, the Territorialists, headed by Zangwill, seceding and forming an organization of their own.

A year later, in November, 1906, the Russian Zionists met at Helsingfors, and adopted the platform of a "synthetic Zion-

¹ See above, p. 51 *et seq.*

ism," that is, a combination of the Palestine idea with the fight for national and cultural autonomy in the Diaspora. The guiding resolution of the Zionist Convention was couched in the following terms:

The Zionist organization of Russia sanctions the affiliation of the Zionists with the movement for liberty among the territorial nationalities of Russia, and advocates the necessity of uniting Russian Jewry upon the principles of the recognition of the Jewish nationality and its self-government in all the affairs affecting Jewish national life.

This slogan of "national rights" was followed by the Zionists during the elections to the first Imperial Duma. It was acted upon to a lesser extent by the two Socialistic factions affiliated with Zionism, the *Poale Zion* and the Zionist Socialists¹; both groups confined themselves to the demand of a minimum of cultural autonomy in the Diaspora, concentrating their entire energy upon emigration, whether it be into Palestine, as advocated by the *Poale Zion*, or into any other territory, as preached by the Zionist Socialists. During 1905-1906, a new Socialistic party with strong nationalistic leanings came into existence. In distinction from the other two Socialistic factions, it demanded a maximum of national autonomy in the Diaspora, including even a Jewish Diet as the central organ of Jewish self-government. The members of this party called themselves "Saymists" (from *Saym*, "Diet"), or went by the name of the "Jewish Socialistic Labor Party."

In the midst of all these partisan platforms stood the "League for the Attainment of Equal Rights for the Jewish

[¹ Called by their Russian initials S. S.]

People," disregarding all party and class affiliations.¹ During the revolutionary period, this organization endeavored to unite all public-spirited Jews in the general Russian and national Jewish struggle for liberty, but with the decline of the revolutionary movement, the centrifugal forces within the League began to assert themselves. The divergence of views and tactics among the various groups composing the League proved stronger than their common interest in the nearest aim, which, with the advent of the political reaction, had become more remote.

Thus it came about that, at the beginning of 1907, the "League for the Attainment of Equal Rights" fell asunder into its component parts. The first to secede from it was the Zionist party, which preferred to carry on its own *Gegenwartsarbeit* under a separate party flag—although, properly considered, a far-reaching activity on behalf of national-Jewish rejuvenation in the lands of the Diaspora was scarcely compatible with the fundamental principle of political Zionism, the "negation of the *Golus*." The Helsingfors program of "synthetic Zionism," the child of the liberty movement, shrank more and more, as the hopes for a Jewish emancipation in Russia receded into the distance.

Out of the "League for Equal Rights" came further the "Jewish People's Group," a party which opposed the Zionist idea altogether and repudiated the attempt to find new Jewish centers outside of Russia. This group, headed by the well-known political leader, M. Vinaver, placed in the center of its program the fight for civil emancipation, in close contact with

¹ See above, p. 111 *et seq.*

the progressive elements of the Russian people, whereas in the question of national-Jewish interests it confined itself to the principle of "self-determination" and to the freedom of Jewish culture in general outlines, without putting forward concrete demands of Jewish autonomy. The People's Group counted among its adherents many representatives of the Jewish *intelligenza* who had more or less discarded the idea of assimilation and had come to recognize the necessity of a minimum of "Jewish-national rights."

The third group, which also took its rise in the "League for Equal Rights," and received the name *Volkspartei*, or Jewish National Party, stood firmly on the platform of national Jewish policies. The underlying principle of this organization, or, more correctly, of this far-reaching social current, which has its origin in the historic development of the Jewish people, was the same principle of national-cultural autonomism which had long before the revolution pursued its own line of development parallel to Zionism.¹ The simultaneous struggle for civil and national rights, the creation of a full-fledged national community, instead of the *Kultusgemeinde* of Western Europe, an autonomous national school, and the rights of both languages, the Hebrew and the Yiddish—such was, in general outlines, the program of the *Volkspartei*. At the same time, this party, taking the historic idea of the transplantation of Jewish centers in the Diaspora as its point of departure, recognized the emigration to America and the colonization of Palestine as great national factors destined to create two new centers of Judaism, one quantitatively powerful center in North Amer-

¹ See above, p. 51.

ica, and a smaller national center, but qualitatively, from the point of view of cultural purity, more valuable, in Palestine.¹

Finally, the "League for Equal Rights" gave birth to a fourth party, the Jewish Democratic Group, which is distinguished from the People's Group by its stronger leaning towards the political parties of the Left, the Russian radicals and Socialists.

Since the dissolution of the "League," these four groups have, as a rule, united in various coalitions. They are all represented on the permanent council at St. Petersburg which, together with the deputies of the Imperial Duma, discusses Jewish political questions as they arise from time to time. Thus, there emerged in Jewish public life a form of representation reflecting the national and political ideas which had assumed concrete shape during the years of the Russian revolution and counter-revolution. The only organization standing outside these federated groups and their common platform of national Jewish politics is the Jewish Social-Democratic party, known as the "Bund," which is tied down by its class program and is barred by it from co-operating with the bourgeoisie, or a non-class organization, even within the domain of national Jewish interests.

¹ Beginning with the year 1905, the emigration to America once more assumed enormous proportions. During 1905-1906, the years of revolution and pogroms, nearly 230,000 Jews left Russia for the United States. During the following years the figure was somewhat lower, but still continued on a fairly high level, amounting to 50,000-75,000 annually. In Palestine, the colonization went apace, and with it the cultural activities. Several schools, with a purely national program, such as the gymnasia in Jaffa and Jerusalem, and other institutions, came into being.

2. THE TRIUMPH OF THE "BLACK HUNDRED"

All these strivings and slogans were severely hit by the *coup d'état* of June 3, 1907, when a large part of what the revolution had achieved was rendered null and void. Owing to the amendment of the suffrage law by this clumsy act of autocratic despotism, the constitution became the handmaid of Tzardom. The ruling power slipped into the hands of the Black Hundred, the extreme monarchistic groups, which were organized in the "League of the Russian People" and openly advocated the restoration of autocracy. The head of the League, Dubrovin, congratulated the emperor upon his act of violence of June 3, and was assured in reply that henceforth the "League of the Russian People" would be the "trusted bulwark" of the Throne. Nicholas might have said with greater justification that the Throne was the bulwark of the League of the Black Hundred, the hirelings of the reaction, who were supplied with millions of rubles from the imperial counter-revolutionary fund, the so-called "black money." Street heroes and pogrom perpetrators became the masters of Russian politics. The sinister forces began the liquidation of the emancipation movement. Day after day the newspaper columns were crammed with reports concerning the arrests of politically "undependable" persons and the executions of revolutionaries. The gallows and the jails became, as it were, the emblems of governmental authority. The spectacle of daily executions which continued for two years (1907-1909) forced from the breast of the grand old man, Leo Tolstoi, the desperate cry: "I cannot keep silent."

Yet Nicholas II. continued his rôle of hangman. While young men and women, among them a great number of Jews,

met their fate on the scaffold, the rioters and murderers from among the Black Hundred, who during the days of October, 1905, alone had ruined hundreds of Jewish communities, remained unpunished. The majority of them were not even put on trial, for the local authorities who were charged with that duty were afraid lest the judicial inquiry might establish their own complicity in the pogroms. But even those who were prosecuted and convicted on the charge of murder and plunder were released from punishment by orders from St. Petersburg. As a rule, the local branch of the League of the Russian People would appeal to the Tzar to pardon the participants in the "patriotic demonstrations"—the official euphemism for anti-Jewish riots—and the invariable response was an immediate pardon which was ostentatiously published in the newspapers. The petitions to the Tzar applying for the pardon of convicted perpetrators of violence went regularly through the Minister of Justice, the ferocious reactionary and anti-Semite Shcheglovitov. No one doubted that this amnesty was granted by virtue of an agreement concluded in 1905 between the Government and the pogrom ringleaders, guaranteeing immunity to the anti-Jewish rioters.

A different treatment was meted out to the Jewish self-defence contingents, which had the courage to oppose the murderers. They were dealt with ruthlessly. In Odessa, a court-martial sentenced six young Jews, members of a self-defence group which was active during the October pogroms, to long terms of hard labor, characterizing the "crime" of these Jews in the following words: "For having participated in a conspiracy having for its object the overthrow of the existing order by means of arming the Jewish proletariat for an attack upon the police and troops." This characterization

was not far from the mark. The men engaged in defending the lives of their brothers and sisters against the murderous hordes were indeed guilty of a criminal offence against the "existing order," since the latter sought its support in these hordes, of whom "the police and troops," as was shown by the judicial inquiries, had formed a part. The appeal taken from this judgment to the highest military court was dismissed and the sentence sustained (August, 1907). The Jews who had done nothing beyond defending life and property could expect neither pardon nor mitigation. This lurid contrast between the release of the pogrom perpetrators and the conviction of the pogrom victims was interpreted as a direct challenge to the Jewish population on the part of Nicholas II. and his frenzied accomplices.

The Black Hundred had a right to feel that it was their day. They knew that the League of the Russian People formed, to use the phrase then frequently applied to it in the press, a "Second Government," which wielded greater power than the official quasi-constitutional Government of Stolypin. The dregs of the Russian populace gave full vent to their base instincts. In Odessa, hordes of League members made it a regular practice to assault the Jews upon the streets with rubber sticks, and, in case of resistance, to fire at them with pistols. Grigoryev, the city-governor, one of the few honest administrators, who made an attempt to restrain this black terrorism, was dismissed in August, 1907,¹ with the result that

¹ When the same official waited upon the Tzar with his report concerning the events at Odessa, he was amazed to see the Tzar come out to him with the badge of the League of the Russian People upon his chest—the same badge which was worn by the rioters in Odessa. He was subsequently given to understand that the Tzar had done so demonstratively to show his solidarity with the hordes of the Black Hundred.

the assaults upon the Jews in the streets assumed an even more sanguinary character. All complaints of the Jews were dismissed by the authorities with the remark: "All this is taking place because the Jews were most prominent in the revolution."

The Government represented by Stolypin, which was anxious to save at least the appearance of a constitutional régime, was often forced to give way before the secret Government of the Black League, which commanded the full sympathy of the Tzar. By orders of the League, Stolypin decreed that one hundred Jewish students who had passed the competitive examination at the Kiev Polytechnicum should be excluded from that institution and that a like number of Russian students who had failed to pass should be admitted instead. The director and dean of the institution protested against this clumsy violation of academic freedom, but their protest was left unheeded, whereupon they tendered their resignation (September, 1907). Following upon this, the Ministry of Public Instruction, yielding to the pressure of the "Second Government," restored the shameful percentage norm, restricting the admission of Jews to institutions of higher learning, which, during the preceding years, had been disregarded by the autonomous professorial councils.

About the same time the Senate handed down a decision declaring the Zionist organization, which had been active in Russia for many years, to be illegal, and giving full scope to the police authorities to proceed with repressive measures against the members of the movement.

3. THE THIRD, OR BLACK, DUMA

Such was the atmosphere which surrounded the elections to the third Imperial Duma in the fall of 1907. The reactionary electoral law of June 3 barred from the Russian Parliament the most progressive and democratic elements of the Empire. Moreover, by splitting the electoral assemblies into class and national curias, the Government succeeded in preventing the election of any considerable number of Jewish deputies. The elections took place under severe pressure from the authorities. Many "dangerous" nominees of the Left were arbitrarily put under arrest on framed-up political charges and, pending the conclusion of the investigation, were temporarily barred from running for office. In some places, the Black Hundred openly threatened the Jews with pogroms, if they dared to nominate their own candidates. As a result, only two Jewish deputies managed to get into the Duma—Friedman from the government of Kovno, and Nisselovich from Courland.

The third Duma, nicknamed the Black, assembled in November, 1907. It had an overwhelming majority of reactionaries and anti-Semites. This majority of the Right was made up of the coalition of the conservative Center, represented by the "Octobrist" party,¹ with the extreme Right wing, the Russian "Nationalists," and Black Hundred. Whenever the Jewish question came up for discussion, the reactionary bloc was always able to drown the voices of the weak opposition, the "Cadet" party (Constitutional Democrats), the *Trudoviki* ("the Labor Party"), and the handful of Socialists.

The attitude of this reactionary Duma toward the Jewish question was revealed at its early sessions when the bill concern-

[¹ So called because it based its program on the imperial manifesto of October 17, 1905. See above, p. 127.]

ing the inviolability of the person was the subject of discussion. The opposition demanded the establishment of the full freedom of movement as the most fundamental condition of the inviolability of the person, but the majority of the Right managed to insert in the bill the following stipulation: "No one shall be limited in the right of choosing his place of residence and in moving from place to place, except in the cases set forth in the law, and excepting the Jews who arrive in localities situated outside the Pale of Settlement" (1908). In this wise the Russian legislators cleverly succeeded in harmonizing the principle of the inviolability of the person with the life-long imprisonment of millions of people in the huge prison house known as the Pale of Settlement.

Their solicitude for the maintenance of this vast ghetto was so intense that the reactionary Government of Stolypin was often the butt of criticism because it did not always show sufficient regard for this holy institution. The fact of the matter was that in May, 1907, Stolypin had issued a circular ordering the governors to stop the expulsion from the interior governments of those Jews who had settled there before August, 1906, and possessed "a family and a domestic establishment" in those provinces, provided they were "harmless to the public order and do not arouse the dissatisfaction of the Christian population." As a result of this circular, several hundred, possibly several thousand, Jewish families were saved from expulsion. In consequence, the Right brought in an interpellation calling upon the Government to explain on what ground it had dared to issue this "charter of privileges" to the Jews. The interpellation, of course, proved effective, and the Government did its utmost to nullify the exemptive

provisions of the circular. The anti-Semitic Duma betrayed the same spirit on another occasion by rejecting in the same year (1908) the bill, introduced by the Opposition, conferring the right of visiting the health resorts or watering-places upon all sufferers, without distinction of nationality.

Yet these legal discriminations were not the worst feature of the third Duma. Even more excruciating was the way in which the Right wing of the Russian Parliament permitted itself to make sport of Judaism and things Jewish. It almost seemed as if the devotees of autocracy, the members of the extreme Right, had come to the Russian Parliament for the express purpose of showering abuse not only on the Russian constitution but also on parliamentary government in general. The hirelings of Nicholas II. danced like a horde of savages over the dead body of the emancipation movement, singing hymns in praise of slavery and despotism. Creatures of the street, the reactionary deputies drenched the tribune of the Imperial Duma with mud and filth, and, when dealing with the Jews, they resorted to methods similar to those which were in vogue among their accomplices upon the streets of the devastated cities. The term *Zhyd* and the adjective *Zhydovski*, in addition to other scurrilous epithets, became the most favored terms of their vocabulary. They inserted formulas and amendments in various bills submitted to the Duma which were deliberately intended to insult the Jews. They called upon the Ministry of War to bring in a bill excluding the Jews from the army, in view of the fact that the Jewish soldiers had proved an element "which corrupts the army in the time of peace and is extremely unreliable in the time of war" (1908). They supported a law barring the Jews from the military

Academy of Medicine, on the ground that the Jewish surgeons had carried on a revolutionary propaganda in the army during the Russo-Japanese War (1910). The Octobrists demanded the exclusion of the Jews from the office of Justice of the Peace, for the reason that their admission was subversive of the principles of a "Christian State" (1909). The remark made on that occasion by Karaulov, a deputy of the Opposition, "Where there is no equality, where there are pariah nationalities, there is no room for a constitutional order," was met from the benches of the Right with the retort: "Thank God for it; we don't want it." A similar cynical outburst of laughter greeted the warning of Rodichev: "Without the abolition of the Jewish disabilities, there is no access to the Temple of Freedom."

The two Jewish Duma deputies did their utmost to get a hearing, but the Black Hundred generally interrupted their speeches by wild and offensive exclamations. In 1910, the Jewish deputy Nisselovich succeeded in obtaining the signatures of one hundred and sixty-six deputies for a legal draft, abrogating the Pale of Settlement. It was laid before the Duma, but resulted merely in fruitless debates. It was referred to a committee which quietly strangled the bill.

4. NEW JEWISH DISABILITIES

Spurred on by the reactionary Duma, the Government went to even greater lengths in its policy of Jewish discrimination. Premier Stolypin, who was getting constantly nearer to the Right, was entirely oblivious of the promise, made by him in 1905, to remove immediately all restrictions which are "the source of irritation and are manifestly obsolete." On the con-

trary, the Ministry presided over by him was systematically engaged in inventing new grievous disabilities. The Jewish deputy Friedman was fully justified in declaring, in a speech delivered in February, 1910, that even "during the most terrible time which the Jews had to live through under Plehve no such cruelties and barbarities were practised as at the present moment." Wholesale expulsions of Jews from the cities situated outside the Pale of Settlement and from the villages within the Pale assumed the character of an epidemic. In the spring of 1910 the Government decided on sacrificing to the Moloch of Jew-hatred a whole hecatomb by expelling twelve hundred Jewish families from Kiev—a measure which aroused a cry of indignation beyond the confines of Russia. The acts of the Government were marked by a refinement of cruelty, for even little children, invalids, and aged people were pitilessly evicted. Particular enmity was shown in the ejection of Jews who had committed the "crime" of visiting summer resorts outside the city lines. The Senate handed down a decision to the effect that the Jewish soldiers who had participated in the defence of the besieged fortress of Port Arthur during the Japanese War were not entitled to the right of residence which had been granted by a former decree¹ to the Jewish soldiers who had taken part in the war.

The spiritual murder of Jewish school children was the function of the black Minister of Enlightenment, with the significant name of Schwartz. The school norm, which, before the revolution, had been applied merely as a Government order, without legislative sanction, was formulated by him into a law and ratified by the Tzar in September, 1908. Henceforth, all

¹ See p. 98 *et seq.*

institutions of higher learning in the Empire were open to the Jews only in a proportion not exceeding three per cent. of the total number of students for the capitals, five per cent. for the educational establishments outside the Pale, and ten per cent. for the Pale of Settlement. In view of the fact that during the emancipation movement the influx of Jews to the higher schools had been very great, so that their number was now vastly in excess of the established norm, it would have become necessary for the higher schools to bar completely all new candidates until the number of Jewish students had been reduced to the prescribed percentage limits. For a while the Minister recoiled from taking this cruel step, and permitted for the next few years the admission of Jewish students within the limits of the percentage norm, calculating the latter in relation to the number of the *newly admitted* Christian students during a given year, without regard to the Jewish students admitted previously. Subsequently, however, many educational institutions closed their doors completely to the Jews, referring, by way of explanation, to the "completion of the norm" by the former pupils. Once more, bands of the "martyrs of learning" could be seen wending their ways toward the universities in foreign lands.

A year later, in 1909, the percentage restrictions governing the secondary schools were also placed on the statute books. The proportion of Jewish admissions was fixed between five and fifteen per cent.—*i. e.*, slightly in excess of the old norm—and was extended in its application to private educational institutions with the prerogatives of government schools. This law spelled ruin to many gymnasia and schools of commerce which, though directed by Christians, were almost entirely

dependent on Jewish support, eighty per cent. of their school population consisting of Jews. As for the gymnazia maintained by Jews, with very few exceptions, they never were able to obtain from the Ministry the status of government institutions.

The educational Hamans, however, went a step further, and in March, 1911, secured an ukase of the Tzar extending the percentage norm to the "externs":¹ henceforward Jews were to be admitted to the examination for the "certificate of maturity"² or for the completion of a part of the curriculum only in a certain proportion to the number of Christian externs. In point of fact, however, there were no Christian externs, since only the Jews who had failed to find admission to the schools were forced to present themselves for examination as externs. In consequence, the enormous number of Jewish children who had been barred from the schools by the percentage norm were deprived of their right to receive a testimonial from a secondary school. This law was passed during a brief interruption in the sessions of the Duma and was never submitted to it. The deputies of the Opposition brought in an interpellation concerning this action, but the "Black Parliament" laid the matter on the table, and the law which lacked all legal basis went into operation.

Swayed more and more by the tendencies of a reactionary Russian nationalism, Stolypin's Government set out to uproot the national-cultural institutions of the "alien" races in Russia. The Poles, the Finns, and other nationalities became

[¹ See vol. II, p. 351.]

[² The name given to the graduation certificate of a gymnasium. In German it is similarly called *Reifezeugnis*.]

the victims of this policy. The lash of oppression was also applied to Jewish cultural life. In 1910, Stolypin issued a circular impressing Russian officialdom with the idea that the cultural and educational societies of the "aliens" contributed towards arousing in them "a narrow national-political self-consciousness" and towards "the strengthening of national separatism," and that for this reason all the societies of the Ukrainians and Jews which were established for the purpose of fostering a separate national culture should be prohibited.

5. THE SPIRITUAL REVIVAL OF RUSSIAN JEWRY

This new blow was aimed right at the heart of Judaism. For after the revolution, when the political struggle had subsided, the Jewish *intelligenzia* directed its entire energy into the channel of national-cultural endeavors. Profiting by the law of 1906, granting the freedom of assemblies and meetings, they founded everywhere cultural, educational, and economic (co-operative and credit) societies. In 1908, the Jewish Literary Society was established in St. Petersburg, which soon counted over a hundred branches in the provinces. The same year saw the formation of the Jewish Historico-Ethnographic Society which began to publish a quarterly review under the name *Yevreyskaya Starina* ("Jewish Antiquity").¹ The oldest educational organization among the Jews, the Society for the Diffusion of Enlightenment, enlarged its activity and was endeavoring to create a new type of national Jewish school.

A multitude of other cultural societies and circles sprang into life with the sanction of the authorities throughout the

[¹ It was edited by the writer of the present work, S. M. Dubnow.]

length and breadth of the Pale. Everywhere lectures and conferences were held and heated debates were carried on, centering around national-cultural problems. Particularly passionate were the discussions about the position of Hebrew and Yiddish in public life, in school and in literature, leading to the alignment of two parties, the Hebraists and the Yiddishists. The lectures, conferences and debates themselves were generally carried on in one of these languages, mostly in the Yiddish vernacular.

In spite of their crudities, these partisan conflicts were a clear indication of the advance of national self-consciousness and of the desire for the upbuilding of a genuine Jewish life upon the concrete foundations of a cultural autonomy. Of course, anti-Semitic Tzardom could not be expected to sympathize with this inner regeneration of Jewry, and, as in the time of Plehve, it directed its blow at the Jewish-national organizations. Here and there the blow was effective. In 1911, the Jewish Literary Society, with its one hundred and twenty branches, which had displayed an energetic activity in the establishment of libraries and the arrangement of public lectures, went out of existence. In general, however, the attacks directed against the Jewish spirit proved much more difficult of realization than the attacks upon Jewish property. The cultural activities continued in their course, defying all external restrictions and persecutions.

The literary revival, which had started in the nineties, and was but temporarily interrupted by the stormy events of the revolutionary period, also came into its own again. The rejuvenation of both the national and the popular language, finding its expression in a widely ramified Jewish literature,

proceeded along paralld lines. The periodical press in Hebrew, represented by the two dailies, *ha-Tzefirah* in Warsaw, and *ha-Zeman* in Vilna, and the monthly *ha-Shiloah* in Odessa, found its counterpart in a popular press in Yiddish, reaching hundreds of thousands of readers, such as the dailies *Fraind* ("The Friend," published since 1903 in St. Petersburg), *Haint* ("To-day"), *Moment*, and others, in Warsaw. In addition there was the Jewish press in Russian: the weeklies *Voskhod*, *Razsvyet*, *Yevreyski Mir* in St. Petersburg, and a few other publications.

In the domain of higher literary productivity, new forces were being constantly added to the old ones. Besides the great national bard Bialik there appeared a number of gifted poets: Shneur, the singer of "storm and stress," of doubts and negations, the romantically inclined Jacob Kohan, Fichman, Reisin, David Einhorn, and many other youthful, as yet scarcely unfolded talents. J. L. Perez found a rival in Shalom Asch, the portrayer of patriarchal Jewish life in the provincial towns of Poland (*Die Städtel*, "The Provincial Town," 1904), and the author of charming sketches from Jewish life, as well as a playwright of note whose productions have met with tumultuous applause both on the Jewish and the non-Jewish stage (*Moshiach's Zeiten*, "Messianic Times," *Gott von Nekomo*, "God of Revenge," *Shabbetai Zewi*, *Yihus*, "Blue Blood"). His numerous co-workers in Yiddish letters have devoted themselves with youthful enthusiasm to the cultivation of this branch of Jewish literature.

In Hebrew fiction a number of talented writers and a group of novelists, who publish their works mostly in the *ha-Shiloah*, came to the fore. The successor of Ahad Ha'am in the editor-

ship of this periodical, Dr. Joseph Klausner, occupies a prominent place in Jewish literature as publicist, critic, and partly as historian. If we add to these talents the not inconsiderable number of writers who are domiciled in Galicia, Palestine, Germany, and America, and draw their inspiration from the vast Russian-Jewish reservoir, the growth of Jewish literature during the last decade stands forth in bold relief.

This progress of inner Jewish life in Russia is truly remarkable. In spite of the catastrophes which have descended upon Russian Jewry during the first decade of the twentieth century, the productivity of the Jewish national spirit has gone on unchecked, and the national-Jewish culture has struck out in all directions. The assimilationist positions, which have been generally abandoned, are only held by a few loyal devotees of a past age. It is true that the process of *elemental* assimilation, which penetrates from the surrounding atmosphere into Judaism through the medium of language, school and literature continues to affect Jewish life with the same force as of old. But there can be no doubt that it is effectively counterbalanced by the centripetal factor of a national culture which is becoming more and more powerful. Large as is the number of religious apostates who have deserted Judaism under the effect of external pressure, and of moral renegades who have abandoned the national ethical ideals of Judaism in favor of a new-fangled decadent æstheticism, it is negligible when compared with the compact mass of Russian Jewry and with the army of intellectuals whose national self-consciousness has been deepened by suffering. As in all previous critical moments in the history of the Jews, the spirit of the nation, defying its new tormentors, has grown stronger in the worn-out body.

The Hamans of Russia who have attempted to crush the Eternal People have failed as signally as their predecessors in Persia, Syria and Byzantium.

RUSSIAN JEWRY SINCE 1911

Being loath to cross the threshold of the present, we shall stop at the year 1911, terminating the first decade of the Thirty Years' War waged by Russian Tzardom against Jewry since 1881. The more recent phases of this war are still fresh in our memory. To put the new campaign of Jew-hatred in its proper light, it will suffice to point out its most conspicuous landmarks which stand out by their extraordinarily sinister features. In 1911, the organizations of the Black Hundred, with the help of their accomplices in the Duma and in the Government circles, manufactured the monstrous "Beilis case." The murder of a Russian boy in Kiev, of a family belonging to a band of thieves, and the discovery of the body in the neighborhood of a brick-kiln owned by a Jew provided the anti-Semites with an opportunity to bring forward the old charge of ritual murder. In the beginning the Government was somewhat uncertain as to the attitude it should adopt towards the mysterious Kiev murder. But a political occurrence which took place at the time put an end to its vacillation. In September, 1911, Premier Stolypin was assassinated in a Kiev theatre in the presence of the Tzar and the dignitaries of State. The assassin, by the name of Bogrov, proved to be the son of a lawyer who was of Jewish extraction, though he had long before turned his back upon his people—a semi-anarchist, who at one time had been

active as police agent for some mysterious revolutionary purposes. The Jewish extraction of the father of the assassin was enough to produce a paroxysm of fury in the camp of the anti-Semitic reactionaries who had lost in the person of Stolypin an exalted patron. In Kiev preparations were openly made for a Jewish massacre, but the Government was afraid that the proposed wholesale execution of Jews would mar the festive solemnity of the Tzar's visit to Kiev. The authorities made it known that the Tzar was not in favor of riots, and a bloody street pogrom was averted.

In its place, however, a bloodless pogrom, extending over two years, was arranged in the form of the Beilis case. Minister of Justice Shcheglovitov, a former Liberal, who had become a fanatical partisan of the Black Hundred, made up his mind to impart to the trial a glaring ritual coloring. The original Judicial inquiry having failed to uncover any traces of Jewish complicity, the Minister of Justice ordered a new special inquiry and constantly changed the personnel of the investigating and prosecuting officials, until he finally secured a bill of indictment in which the whole case was represented as a ritual crime, committed by the Jew Beilis with the participation of "undiscovered persons."

For two years, the Beilis case provided the pabulum for a wild anti-Semitic campaign which was carried on among the so-called better classes, on the streets, in the press, and in the Imperial Duma. The court trial which took place in Kiev in October, 1913, was expected to crown with success the criminal design harbored by the Minister of Justice and the Black Hundred, but the expectations of the Government were disappointed. In spite of a carefully selected court personnel, which

consisted of anti-Semitic judges representing the Crown, and of sworn jurymen, ignorant peasants and burghers who believed in the ritual murder legend, Beilis was acquitted, and the authorities found it impossible to fasten the guilt upon the Jews.

Exasperated by the failure, the Government wreaked its vengeance upon the liberal-minded intellectuals and newspaper men, who, by their agitation against the hideous libel, had wrested the prey from the hands of the Black Hundred. Scores of legal actions were instituted not only against newspaper editors and contributors but also against the St. Petersburg Bar Association, which had adopted a resolution protesting against the method pursued by Shcheglovitov in the Beilis trial. The sensational case against the metropolitan lawyers was tried in June, 1914, one month before the declaration of the World War, and terminated in a verdict of guilty for twenty-five lawyers, on the charge of "having agitated against the Government."

The triennium preceding the World War witnessed the rise of a new danger for Judaism, this time coming from Poland. The extraordinary intensity of the national and religious sentiment of the Poles, accentuated by the political oppression which for more than a hundred years had been inflicted upon them, particularly by the hands of Russian despotism, has, during the last decade, been directed against the Jewish people. The economic progress made by the Jews in the two industrial centers of Russian Poland, in Warsaw and Lodz, gave rise to the boycott agitation. Polish anti-Semites proclaimed the slogan "Do not buy from Jews!", aiming the cry specifically against the "Litvaks," that is, the hundreds of thousands of

Russian Jews who, in the course of the last few decades, had been chiefly instrumental in the economic advancement of those two centers. The cloak beneath which this agitation was carried on was purely that of Polish nationalism: the Russian Jews were alleged, on the one hand, "to Russify Poland," and, accused, on the other hand, of an opposite tendency, of asserting themselves as the members of a separate Jewish nationality, with a press and a social organization of their own, which refuses to be merged in the Polish people.

The anti-Semitic movement in Poland, which began shortly after the revolution of 1905, assumed extraordinary dimensions in 1910-1911, when the boycott became a fierce economic pogrom, reaching its culmination in 1912, during the election campaign to the fourth Imperial Duma. The Jewish electors of Warsaw formed a majority, and were, therefore, in a position to send a Jewish deputy to the Duma. Yet out of consideration for the national susceptibilities of the Poles who insisted on sending as a representative of the Polish capital one of their "own," a Christian, the Jews were willing to accept a Polish candidate, provided the latter was not an anti-Semite. When, however, the Polish election committee, disregarding the feelings of the Jews, nominated the anti-Semitic candidate Kukhazhevski, the Jews gave their votes to the Polish Socialistic nominee Yaghello, who carried the election. This attitude of the Jews aroused a storm of indignation among the higher classes of Polish society. An anti-Jewish campaign, marked by extraordinary bitterness, was set in motion, and in the press and on the streets the Jews were nicknamed "Beilises," an echo of the ritual murder legend which had given rise to such horrors in ancient Catholic

Poland. The economic boycott was carried on with incredible fury, and in a number of towns and villages the cowardly enemies of the Jews, being afraid of attacking them openly, set fire to Jewish houses, with the result that in many cases entire families were consumed in the flames.

The *furor Polonicus* assumed more and more dangerous forms, so that at the beginning of the World War, in 1914, almost the entire Polish nation, from the "progressive anti-Semites" down to the clericals, were up in arms against the Jews. From this armed camp came the defiant war cry: "On the banks of the Vistula there is no room for two nationalities," thus sentencing to death the two millions of Polish Jewry who consider themselves a part of the Jewish, and not of the Polish nation. Out of this soil of national hatred crawled forth the snake of the terrible "military libel," which during the first year of the war drenched Polish Jewry in rivers of blood. Over the bleeding body of the Jewish people Polish and Russian anti-Semitism joined hands. Horrors upon horrors were perpetrated before which the ancient annals of Jewish martyrdom fade into insignificance.

* * *

Nearly twenty centuries have passed since the ancient Judæo-Hellenic Diaspora sent forth a handful of men who established a Jewish colony upon the northern Scythian, now Russian, shores of the Black Sea. More than a thousand years ago the Jews of Byzantium from one direction, and those of the Arabian Caliphate from another, went forth to colonize the land of the Scythians. The Jew stood at the cradle of ancient Kiovia Russia, which received Christianity from the hands

of the Byzantines. The Jew witnessed the birth of Catholic Poland, and, during the stormy days of the Crusades, fled from the West of Europe to this haven of refuge which was not yet entirely in the hands of the Catholic Church. He has seen Poland in its bloom and decay; he has witnessed the rise of Muscovite Russia, tying the fate of one-half of his nation to the new Russian Empire. Here the power that dominates history opened up before the Jewish people a black abyss of mediævalism in the midst of the blazing light of modern civilization, and finally threw it into the flames of the gigantic struggle of nations. What may the World War be expected to bring to the World-Nation? Full of agitation, the Jew is looking into the future, and the question of his ancient prophet is trembling on his lips: "Ah Lord God! wilt Thou make a full end of the remnant of Israel?"¹ Let the entire past of the Jewish people serve as an answer to this question—a people which, in the maelstrom of human history, has succeeded in conquering the two cosmic forces: Time and Space.

[¹ Ezekiel XI, 13.]

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INDEX

INDEX

- Aaron (I.)**, king of Khazars, I 26
- Aaron (II.)**, king of Khazars, I 26
- Aaron**, rabbi of Tulchyn, I 148
- Aaron**, of Karlin, hasidic leader, I 234
- Aaron Samuel Kaidanover**, see Kaidanover
- Abderrahman III.**, caliph of Cordova, I 24
- Abraham**, son of Isaac, Polish minter, I 42
- Abraham Prokhovnik**, see Prokhovnik
- Abrahams**, Israel, quoted, I 160
- Abramius**, Russian priest, objects to erection of synagogue, I 252
- Abramovich**, Shalom Jacob (*Mendele Mokher Sforim*), Hebrew and Yiddish writer, II 231 ff, III 60 f
- Abydos**, near Constantinople, seat of Sabbatai Zevi, I 206, 219
- Adam**, see Lebensohn, Abraham Baer
- Adamovich**, Mary, alleged victim of ritual murder, II 73
- Adrianople**, Sabbatai Zevi active in, I 207
- Agriculture**, among Jews in Lithuania, I 60, 68, II 72
in Poland, I 68, 264, II 89
championed by Nota Shklover, I 338; by Isaac Baer Levinsohn and by Maskilim in general, II 126
promoted by Russian Government, I 342 f, II 20, 61, 71
hampered by it, II 48, 197, III 10, 24 f; see also Colonization
- Ahad Ha'am**, pen-name of Asher Ginzberg, II 423
- Hebrew writer and thinker, II 423, III 59 f
- exponent of Spiritual Zionism, II 48 ff
- associated with Palestinian colonization, III 49
- founder of Order *Bne Moshe*, III 49
- participates in Zionist Convention, III 51
- founder and editor of *Ha-Shiloah*, III 58, 162 f
- Ahijah**, the prophet, alleged teacher of *Besht*, I 228
- Aix-la-Chapelle**, Jewish question discussed at Congress of, I 398 f

- Akhal-Tekke**, oasis in Central Asia, offered to Jews for settlement, II 306
- Akmolinsk**, territory of, in Siberia, II 367
- Aksavok, Ivan**, Russian publicist, advocates limited emancipation of Jews, II 208
defends pogroms, II 278
- Aktziznik**, Russian name for farmer of excise dues, II 186, 241
- Albedinski**, governor-general of Warsaw, suppresses pogrom, II 282
- Albo, Joseph**, philosophic work of, studied in Poland, I 133 f
- Alexander the Great**, indirectly responsible for Jewish immigration into Eastern Europe, I 13 f
- Alexander (Yaghello)**, grand duke of Lithuania (1492-1506) and king of Poland (1501-1506), grants autonomy to Karaites, I 64 f
favors Jewish capitalists, I 65, 71
expels Jews from Lithuania, and confiscates their property (1495), I 65
allows Jews to return to Lithuania and restores their property (1503), I 65, 70 f
attended by Jewish body-physician, I 132
- Alexander I.**, emperor of Russia (1801-1825), I 335-413
receives report of "Jewish Committee," I 341 f
sanctions Jewish Statute of 1804, I 342
agrees to postponement of expulsion from villages, I 347
invites Jews to send deputies, I 351
establishes friendly relations with Napoleon, I 350 f
orders again expulsion from villages, I 361
again postpones it, I 352
Hasidim indebted to, I 356
releases Shneur Zalman, Hasidic leader, I 378
praises patriotism of Jews, I 358
accords friendly reception to Jewish deputations, I 358, 359, 392 f
appealed to by Christian residents of Vilna and Kovno against Jews, I 369 f
orders investigation of ritual murder, II 74
issues decree forbidding charge of ritual murder, II 74
grants autonomy to Poland, II 88
appoints his brother Constantine military commander of Poland, II 16

- receives report on Jews of Poland, II 94
- appealed to by Poles against Jews, II 97, 99
- vetoed Polish law barring Jews from liquor trade, II 94
- reaction under, I 390 ff, 395 ff
- favors conversion of Jews, I 396
- establishes "Society of Israelitic Christians," I 396 f
- refuses to dissolve it, I 400
- sanction severe measures against "Judaizers," I 403
- receives memorandum of Lewis Way on Jews of Russia, I 398
- renews oppression of Jews, I 404
- decrees expulsion from villages in White Russia, I 406
- appoints new "Jewish Committee," I 407
- objects to residence of Jews in Russian Interior, I 409
- contemplates introduction of military service among Jews, II 15
- favors agriculture among Jews, II 197, III 24; see I 363 ff
- beginnings of revolutionary movement under, I 410
- Alexander II, emperor of Russia (1855-1881), II 154-242
- decendants of Jewish converts prominent during reign of, I 388
- releases imprisoned Jewish printer, II 124
- confirms sentence of Jews accused of ritual murder, II 152
- pardons them later, II 153
- abolishes juvenile conscription, II 155 f
- sanctions opening of Russian Interior to first guild merchants, II 162; to university graduates, II 166, 348; to artisans, II 170
- promotes handicrafts among Jews, II 346 f
- Jewish trade school named after, III 13
- does not favor agriculture among Jews, II 197
- refuses right of universal residence to "Nicholas Soldiers," II 171 ff; finally grants it, II 29, 172
- restricts appointment of rabbis and teachers, II 175
- sanctions removal of Jewish disabilities in Poland, II 95, 181 f
- admits Jews to bench, III 26
- receives memorandum from Brafman, II 187
- approves of popular representation, II 345
- grants liberties to Zemstvos, II 386
- assassinated, II 243, 279

- influence of, on succeeding reign, II 349
- laws in favor of Jews enacted by, repealed by successor, II 399
- Jewish policy of, declared ineffective, II 271, 309
- era of, depicted by Mendelev Mokher Sforim, III 61
- Alexander III., emperor of Russia (1881-1894), II 243-429
 - prejudiced against Jews while yet crown prince, II 202, 203, 244
 - influenced by Pobedonostzev, II 245
 - holds conferences to decide policy of state, II 244
 - promises to maintain autocracy, II 246
 - receives Jewish deputation, II 260 f
 - endorses Ignatyev's anti-Jewish policy, II 272
 - appoints Gubernatorial Commissions, II 272
 - regrets necessity of suppressing pogroms, II 284
 - disregards Jews in coronation manifesto, II 338
 - bent on limiting admission of Jews to schools, II 339 f, 349
 - closes Jewish school of handicrafts, II 347
 - supports anti-Jewish minority of Pahlen Commission, II 370
 - affected by "miraculous" escape in railroad accident, II 378
 - condemns Jews for Crucifixion, II 379
 - reads and supports anti-Semitic papers, II 380
 - disregards Solovyov's appeal in favor of Jews, II 390
 - appealed to by Mayor of London in favor of Jews, II 390
 - angered by London appeal, II 393
 - United States Congress decides to appeal to, II 395
 - endorses emigration of Jewish proletariat, II 414
 - favors liquor state monopoly as anti-Jewish measure, III 22
 - refuses petition of Jewish soldiers to remain in Moscow, II 404
 - expels heads of Moscow Jewish community, II 424
 - threatens to sell at auction Moscow synagogue, II 424, III 12
 - causes expulsion of Jews from Yalta, II 429, III 18
 - death of, II 429
 - Jewish sect promises to name children after, II 334

- Alexandria**, Egypt, emigration from, to South Russia, I 16
- Alexandra** (government of Kher-son), pogrom at, III 100
- Alexandrovka**, village in Podolia, II 301
- Alexeyev**, member of Russian Senate, investigates condi-
tion of Jews, I 347 f, 352
- Alexeyev**, burgomaster of Mos-
cow, opposes Jews, II 400 f
- Alexis Michaelovich**, Russian
Tzar, annexes Little Russia,
I 152 f, 244
invades Polish provinces, I 245
expels Jews from Moghilev, I
153
persecutes Jews of Vilna, I 154
imposes death penalty on con-
verts to Judaism, I 253
- Alexis**, son of Nicholas II, birth
of, occasions manifesto, III
98
- Alexius**, Russian priest, con-
verted to Judaism, I 36
- Alfasi**, work of, studied in Po-
land, I 118
- Algiers**, emigration of Russian
Jews to, II 69
- Aliens**, Jews in Russian law
designated as, II 367
- Allgemeine Zeitung des Juden-
tums*, quoted, II 55
founded by Ludwig Philipp-
son, II 67, 219
hails end of persecution in
Russia, II 67
- Alliance, the Holy**, inaugurates
European reaction, I 390
assembles in Aix-la-Chapelle, I
398
- Alliance Israélite Universelle**,
headed by Crémieux, II 153
suspected by Russian anti-
Semites, II 189, 194
assists Russian-Jewish emi-
grants, II 268 f, 297
establishes agricultural settle-
ment in Palestine, II 322
- Alma**, locality in Crimea, I 26
- Altaras, Isaac**, of Marseilles,
visits Russia, II 69
- Alter, Isaac Itche Meier**, hasidic
leader in Poland, II 122
- Alubika**, locality in Crimea, I 26
- Alus**, locality in Crimea, I 26
- America**, see Argentina and
United States
- American Hebrew, The**, quoted,
II 296
- Amoraim**, names of, collected by
Polish rabbi, I 200
- Amsterdam**, emissary of Sab-
batai Zevi active in, I 204
Jews of, petition Peter the
Great, I 246
- Ananyev** (government of Kher-
son), pogrom at, II 251
- Anapa**, see Gorgippia
- Andreas**, of Brixen, alleged vic-
tim of ritual murder, I 179
- Andrusovo**, Treaty of (1667),
provides for cession of Po-
lish territory to Russia,

- I 159; and release of prisoners, I 245
- Anna** (or **Anne**), Russian empress, permits retail trade to Jews, I 251
- expels Jews from Little Russia, I 254
- attended by Jewish body-physician, I 258
- Anti-Semitism**, in Poland, I 231 f, II 94 ff, III 166 ff
- German A., referred to by Russian dignitaries, II 309
- contrasted with Russian, III 6 f
- in Russia, condemned by Russian writers, II 208
- denounced by Solovyov, II 387
- effect on Zionism, III 48 f
- Anti-Trinitarians**, Christian rationalistic sect in Poland, I 79, 136
- Antwerp**, Russian Jews in, II 420
- Apostol**, see Daniel Apostol; see also Conversion
- Apter**, Joshua Heshel, hasidic leader, II 121
- Arabs**, backward condition of, II 375
- Jews in Palestine buy land from, II 422
- Arakcheyev**, Alexis, Russian reactionary, I 395, 406, II 19
- Arbeiter Stimme**, socialistic organ in Yiddish, III 56
- Archangel**, government of, II 367
- Arendar**, name explained, I 93
- position of, I 93, 112, 265 f
- in the Ukraine, I 141 f, 152
- maltreated by Poles, I 169 f
- Arendator**, see **Arendar**
- Argentina**, emigration of Russian Jews to, II 413, 416 ff, 419
- Arians**, heterodox Christian sect in Poland, I 91, 136, 164
- Isaac Troki argues with, I 137
- Aristotle**, studied in Polish yeshibahs, I 120, 126
- Arisu**, Slavonic tribe, I 26
- Armenians**, in Crimea, I 34
- in Lemberg, I 53
- Armleder**, persecution of, drives Jews to Poland, I 50
- Army**, Jews volunteer in Polish A., I 152, 293 ff, II 105 f
- Jews assist Polish A., in defence of country, I 147 f, 154, 293
- Jews barred from advancement in Russian A., II 157, 354
- number of Jews disproportionately large in Russian A., II 355 ff, 394.
- promotion of Jews in Russian A., limited to rank of sergeant, II 157
- Third Russian Duma proposes exclusion of Jews from, III 155 f
- See Military Service, Recruits, and Soldiers

- Aronovich, Joseph**, Polish-Jewish patriot, I 394
- Artemisia**, name of Jewess in Crimea, I 16
- Arthur**, president of United States, submits to Congress papers relating to Russian Jews, II 294
- Artisans**, Jews form 50% of A., in Poland, I 264
 excluded from Christian trade-guilds, I 266
 form special estate in Russia, I 308
 form part of "burgher class," II 405
 encouraged in Jewish Statute of 1804, I 344
 opposed by Christian trade-guilds, I 360
 exempted from military service, II 20
 granted right of residence outside Pale, II 161, 168, 170
 fictitious A., in St. Petersburg, II 343 f
 restricted to products of their own workmanship, II 347
 wives of, forbidden to engage in trade, II 385
 attempt to withdraw from, right of residence outside Pale, II 399
 school for A., closed, II 347
 bank for A., opposed, III 25 f
- expelled from Moscow, II 402, III 14
- Baron Hirsch's gift in favor of, declined, II 415
- Asefat Hakamim**, Hebrew magazine, II 223
- Ash, Shalom**, Yiddish novelist and playwright, III 162
- Asher**, rabbi in Cracow, I 104 f
- Ashkenasi, Solomon**, Polish court physician, I 132
- Asia, Central**, steppes of, suggested for settlement of Russian Jews, II 285, 306
- Asia Minor**, emigration from, to Black Sea coast, I 13 f, 16
 establishment of Jewish state in, advocated, I 412; see also Turkey
- Assimilation**, see Polonization and Russification
- "Assortment" (classification), of Jews, decreed by Nicholas I., II 64 ff, 141 ff
 reflected in manifesto of Alexander II., II 157
- Astrakhan (city)**, ancient Khazar capital situated near, I 19
- Astrakhan (government)**, mosques destroyed in, I 254
 opened to Jewish agriculturists, I 342
 villages in, forbidden to Jews, I 343
 Jews compared with Kalmycks in, II 367

- Atyney** ("Athenaeum"), Russian magazine, defends Jews, II 208
- Augustus II.**, king of Poland (1697-1704), I 167
 ratifies Jewish privileges, I 168
 expels Jews from Sandomir, I 173
- Augustus III.**, king of Poland (1733-1763), I 167
 ratifies Jewish privileges, I 168, 180
 appealed to by Jews of Posen, I 175
 acquits Jews of ritual murder charge, I 176
 grants safe conduct to Frankists, I 215
 acts as God-father to Frank, I 218
- Austria**, Jews flee from, to Poland, I 66
 Polish Jews export goods to, I 67
 Polish Jews pass, on way to Palestine, I 209
 shares in partitioning of Polish territory, I 186, 262, 274, 371
 Frank stays in, I 220
 Berek Yoselevich arrested in, I 297
 wages war against duchy of Warsaw, I 303
 forbids Jews to communicate with Paris, I 346 f
- represented at Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle, I 398 f
 Jews of, forbidden to settle in Russia (1824), I 409
 grants emancipation to Jews, II 30
 imposes military duty on Jews, II 30
 Jewish policy of, serves as model for Russia, II 46, 49
 Israel of Ruzhin escapes to, II 121
 Parliament of, meets in Kremser, II 177
 Jewish socialists expelled from, II 224
 Russian-Jewish students in, II 351
 Government of, supports plans of Baron Hirsch, II 416
 anti-Semitism rampant in, III 42
- Autocracy**, upheld by Alexander III., II 246; by Nicholas II., III 8
 re-establishment of, favored by Black Hundred, III 149
- Autoemancipation**, doctrine of, propounded by Leo Pinsker, II 330 ff
 contrasted with emancipation, II 331
- Autonomism**, national-cultural, doctrine of, propounded by Dubnow, III 41. 51 ff
 adopted as political platform, III 144

- Autonomy, Jewish, in ancient Tauris**, I 16
 granted, or confirmed, by kings of Poland, I 52, 53, 62, 72 f, 83 f, 98, 104, 105
 rise and development of, I 103 ff, 188 ff
magna charta of (1551), I 105 ff
 curtailment of, advocated by Poles, I 273, 280 f, 282
 Jews of Poland plead for preservation of, I 291
 recognized by Russian Government (1776), I 308 ff
 curtailed by it (1795), I 319 f
 recognized in modified form in Statute of 1804, I 344
 larger amount of, demanded by Jews, I 349
 abolition of, recommended by Council of State (1840), II 49
 abolished by Nicholas I. (1844), II 59 ff
 scheme of, proposed for kingdom of Poland, II 92
 abolished in Poland (1822), II 102
 abolition of last remnants of, recommended by Committee of Russian Government, II 195
 St. Petersburg Jews, plead for, II 370
 demanded by adherents of national-cultural Autonom-ism, III 53 f; by "Bund," III 57; by Vilna community, III 109; by League for Equal Rights, III 112; by Russian Jewry in general, III 161; see also Kahal
- Azariah**, alleged biblical prophet, quoted to substantiate ritual murder libel, II 73
- Azov, Sea of**, Jewish settlements on shores of, I 14 f
 movement of Khazars towards, I 19
- Baal-Shem**, name explained, I 223
 Joel, I 203
 founder of Hasidism acting as, I 224
Israel Baal-Shem-Tob, see Israel
- Bab Al-Abwab** (now Derbent), city in Caucasia, I 26
- Babunj**, land of, synagogue destroyed in, I 22
- Babylonia**, Judaism of, influences Khazars, I 20
 scholars of, invited by Khazars 21, I 27
 Poland compared with, I 122
- Baer**, of Lubavici, head of *Habad* sect, II 117
- Baer**, of Mezherich, disciple of *Israel Baal-Shem-Tob*, I 227, I 229 f, I 232
 disciples of, carry Hasidism to North, I 234; establish Hasidism in Poland, I 33, 34

- great-grandson of Israel of Ruzhin, II 120
- Bagdad**, caliphate of, relation of Khazars to, I 22
- city of, threatened by Russians, I 26 f
- Gaon of, communicates with Jewish scholars in Russia, I 33
- Bahurs**, or Yeshibah students, supported by Jewish communities in Poland, I 116
- large number of in Lithuania, II 113
- affected by *pilpul* method, I 119
- study Aristotle, I 120
- Bak-Tadlud**, city in Caucasia, I 26
- Bakchi-Sarai**, Tartar capital, I 35
- Bakst**, professor, attends Jewish conference in St. Petersburg, II 304
- opposes Jewish emigration from Russia, II 306
- Balkan Peninsula**, movement of Khazars towards, I 20
- Balta** (Podolia), pogrom at, II 299 ff, 314, 316, 321
- rabbi of, pleads for rioters, II 316
- visited by governor-general, II 316 f
- Jewish community of, sends deputation to St. Petersburg, II 316 f
- Baltic Provinces**, number of Jews in, II 168
- new Jewish settlers expelled from, II 32
- Jews barred from (1835), II 40
- expulsion of old settlers from, repealed, II 428
- in throes of terrorism (1905), III 130; see Courland and Livonia
- Bank**, St. Petersburg lawyer, member of Jewish deputation to Alexander III., II 261
- Baptism**, see Conversion
- Bar** (Podolia), massacre at, I 149
- Polish conference of, I 183
- Bar**, the Russian, established 1864, II 173
- Jews admitted to, II 73
- excluded from, II 352 f; III 26 f
- Bar Association of St. Petersburg protests against Beilis case, II 166
- Baranov**, Russian Senator, dispatched to White Russia, I 406
- "Bare-Footed Brigade,"** the, nickname for tramps, II 253
- active in pogroms, 253, 256
- Bartnit**, city in Crimea, I 26
- Baruch**, see Boruch

- Bashi-Buzuks**, Turkish irregular troops, II 253
pogrom makers compared with, II 253, 289
- Basil**, the Macedonian, emperor of Byzantium, persecutes Jews, I 23
- Basil**, Christian martyr, I 17
- Basil**, grand duke of Moscow, I 242
- Basle**, Council of, adopts canonical laws against Jews, I 63
Zionist Congresses at, III 44 f, 84 f, 144
"Program," III 44; modified by Ahad Ha'am, 50
- Basurman**, Russian name for non-Orthodox, I 35
- Batory**, Stephen, king of Poland (1576-1586), forbids charge of ritual murder and desecration, I 89, 96
ratifies and amplifies Jewish privileges, I 89
defends Jews of Posen, I 90
patronizes Jesuites, I 90 f
grants license to Jewish printer, I 131
attended by Jewish body-physician, I 132
recaptures city of Polotzk, I 243
- Bavaria**, Wagenseil, anti-Jewish writer, native of, I 138
Max Lilienthal, native of, II 52
- Beaconsfield**, Earl of, champions equal rights for Jews, II 202
hostile to Russia, II 288
- Beards**, shaving of (and of earlocks), recommended by Polish reformers, I 282, and by Kalmansohn, I 385
"bearded regiment" in Warsaw, II 106; see Earlocks
- Beilis**, Mendel, accused of ritual murder, III 82, 164 ff
nickname for Jews in Poland, III 167
- Bekri**, Al-, Arabic writer, quoted, I 21
- Belza**, Polish judge, arranges libel against Jews, I 101
- Belzhytz** (Province of Lublin), Jacob of, author of polemical treatise in Polish, I 136
- Bench**, the Russian, Jews excluded from, II 352 f, III 26
- Benckendorff**, chief of Russian gendarmerie, II 21
- Benedict XIV.**, appealed to by Jews of Poland, I 179
- Benjamin**, bibliographer in Vilna, II 136
- Benjamin**, king of Khazars, I 26
- Benjamin** of Tudela, Jewish traveller, I 32; II 233
- Benjamin II.** (Joseph Israel), Jewish traveller, II 233
- Benjamin III.**, name of fictitious traveller in Yiddish and Hebrew novel, II 233

- Berdychev** (government of Kiev), Levi Itzhok, hasidic leader, resident of, I 232 f, 382
- Jews of, release fellow-Jews from prison, I 266
- Jews of, support Polish cause, I 292
- Tobias Feder, Hebrew writer, of, I 388
- Max Lilienthal accorded friendly reception at, II 56
- Halperin, resident of, member of Rabbinical Commission, II 57
- Mendelev Mokher Sforim, resident of, II 232
- pogrom at, averted by Jewish self-defence, II 256 f
- visited by White, representative of Baron Hirsch, II 418
- Jewish community of, signs petition for equal rights, III 108
- Berdychevsky, Micah Joseph**, Hebrew writer, III 60
- Berek**, Kahal elder, I 172
- Berek Yoselovich**, see Yoselovich
- Bergson**, Jacob, prominent Jew of Warsaw, II 103
- Berkovich, Joseph**, son of Berek Yoselovich, calls for Jewish volunteers to Polish army, II 105
- Berlin** (Germany), Mendelssohn circle in, centre of enlightenment, I 238
- attracts Jewish students from Poland and Russia, I 239, 388, II 114
- "Berliner" synonymous with heretic, I 278, 384
- enlightenment of, hated by hasidic leaders, I 383
- influences Warsaw, I 300 f, 384 f
- epidemic of conversions in, I 388
- Congress of, II 202
- Jewish socialists in, II 223
- stock-exchange of, affected by pogrom at Rostov, II 358
- refugees from Moscow arrive in, II 408
- Russian Jews emigrate to, II 420
- place of publication, I 386; III 51, 52, 58, 60
- Berlin, Shmerka**, of Velizh, accused of ritual murder, II 75, 77
- Berlin, Slava**, wife of former, arrested on same charge, II 77
- Berlin**, Jewish scholar, member of Jewish deputation to Alexander III., II 261
- Berliner, A.**, quoted, I 179
- Bernardine Monks**, in Poland, active in ritual murder libel, I 100 f, 177
- Bersohn**, Polish-Jewish writer, quoted, I 105

- Berthenson, I.**, converted Jew, Russian court physician, II 214
- Besht**, see Israel Baal-Shem-Tob
- Bessarabetz**, anti-Semitic paper in Kishinev, III 169 ff
- Bessarabia**, included in Pale (1835), II 40
- Jewish agricultural colonies in, II 72
- expulsions from, II 385
- anti-Semitic agitation in, III 69 ff
- von Raaben, governor of, III 74, 77
- Urussov, governor of, III 93, 97; see Kishinev
- Bezalel**, Jewish tax-farmer in Poland, I 167
- Bezalel**, of Kobrin, Hebrew author, I 201
- Bialocerkiew**, see Byelaya Tzerkov
- Bibikov**, governor-general of Kiev, criticises Jews in official report, II 47
- arrests Israel of Ruzhyn, II 120 f
- Bialik, Hayyim Nahman**, Hebrew poet, III 63, 162
- composes poem on Kishinev massacre, III 79 f
- Bialystok**, province of, annexed by Prussia (1795), I 297
- Bialystok** (city, government of Grodno), Samuel Mohilever, rabbi of, II 378
- Poles threaten massacre of Russians and Jews in, I 357
- Jewish labor movement in, III 55
- pogroms at, III 114 f, 120, 136 f; discussed by First Russian Duma, 137 f
- Bible**, studied by Khazars, I 21
- taught in Yiddish translation in Poland, I 114
- study of, encouraged by Isaac Baer Levinsohn, II 126
- Bible Society**, of London, model of Russian Bible Society, I 396
- Lewis Way, representative of, champions cause of Russian Jews, I 397
- Bible Society**, the Russian, established under Alexander I., I 396
- Bielsk** (Lithuania), Jew of, accused of ritual murder, I 87
- Bielski**, Polish chronicler, quoted, 180
- "**Bilu**," society of Palestinian pioneers, organized in Kharkov, II 321 f
- Bismarck**, German chancellor, favors equal rights for Jews, II 202

- Black Death**, the, stimulates immigration of Jews into Poland, I 50
penetrates to Poland, I 52
ravages of 1648 compared with those of, I 157
- Black Hundred**, the, patronized by Nicholas II., III 113, 151
deputation of, received by Nicholas II., III 131
supposed to number 100,000, III 126
organized as "League of Russian People," III 141
gain in Second Duma, III 142
triumph of, III 149 ff
active in organizing pogroms, III 113 ff, 124 ff, 126 ff, 136
engineer Beilis case, III 164 ff
take advantage of Jewish rightlessness, III 132
intimidate Jews during elections, III 134, 153
insult Jewish deputies in Duma, III 156; see League of the Russian People
- Black Sea**, the, ancient Jewish settlements on shores of, I 13 ff
Khazars move in direction of, I 19, 28
Petahiah of Ratisbon travels to, I 33
establishment of Jewish colonies in neighborhood of, advocated, I 331
- Blaine, James G.**, American Secretary of State, expresses resentment at persecution of Russian Jews, II 395 f
- Blinov**, Russian student, killed while defending Jews, III 116
- Blondes, David**, Jewish barber in Vilna, accused of ritual murder, III 37
- Board of Deputies**, Jewish organization in London, pleads for Russian Jews, II 262
- Bobovnya** (government of Minsk), Jewish convert from, slanders Jews, II 80
Jewish community of, protests against denial of Jewish franchise, III 121
- Bobrov**, District of (government of Voronyezh), Judaizing sect spreads to, I 401
- Bogdanov**, Russian soldier, accuses Jews of ritual murder, II 151
- Bogdanovich**, Russian general, organizes pogroms, III 125 f
- Bogolepov**, Minister of Public Instruction, bars Jews from schools, III 27 f
assassinated by Russian terrorist, 29
- Bogrov, Grigory**, Russian-Jewish writer, II 241 f

- Bogrov**, assassinates Stolypin, III 164 f
- Bohemia**, visited by Pethahiah of Ratisbon, I 33
- oppressed Jews of, emigrate to Poland, I 41
- Jews from, form community in Cracow, I 104
- Magdenburg Law adopted in many parts of, I 41
- talmudic learning carried from, to Poland, I 122
- Mordecai Jaffe, native of, famous rabbi in Poland, I 127
- Jews of, apply to Polish rabbis for religious guidance, I 125
- Boleslav the Pious** (*Polish*, Boleslav Pobozny), of Kalish, prince of Great Poland, grants charter to Jews, I 45 ff
- charter of, ratified by successors, I 51, 59; embodied in Polish code of law, I 71
- Boleslav the Shy** (*Polish*, Boleslav Wstydlivy), Polish prince, encourages immigration of Germans, I 44
- Bona Sporza**, Polish queen, sells office of state, I 76
- Bonaparte**, see Napoleon
- Border Zone**, along Polish-Prussian and Polish-Austrian border (Twenty-one-Verst Zone), barred to Jews by Polish Government (1823), II 95
- law excluding Jews from, repealed by Alexander II., II 95, 181
- along Western Russian border (Fifty-Verst Zone), villages in, barred to new Jewish settlers (1835), II 40, 366
- expulsion of Jews from entire B. Z. ordered, II 63; but not executed, II 64
- new attempt to expel Jews from, II 385
- Eorispol** (government of Poltava), pogrom at, II 267
- Borki** (government of Kherson), railroad accident to Alexander III., in neighborhood of, affects his policies, II 378
- Borukh Leibov**, Jewish tax-farmer, I 249
- publicly executed, I 251 ff
- Borukh Shklover**, translates Euclid into Hebrew, I 381
- Borukh of Tulchyn**, hasidic leader, I 232
- succeeded by Joshua Heshel, II 121
- Bosporan Era**, The, I 15
- Bosporus**, the Cimmerian, or Taurian, also called Panticapaeum (now Kerch), ancient Jewish community in, I 14 f

- Greco-Jewish inscription found in, I 15
- bishop of, instructed to convert Jews, I 18
- Boycott**, economic, against Jews in Poland, III 166 ff
- Brafman, Jacob**, Jewish apostate, accuses Jews of forming illegal Kahal organization, II 187 ff
- author of "Book of the Kahal," I 189
- accuses *Alliance Israélite* of heading world Kahal, II 189
- accuses Society for Diffusion of Enlightenment of forming part of Kahal, II 216
- influences Russian authorities, II 190, 193 ff, 240
- example of, followed by Lute-
stanski, II 202
- Bramson, L.**, member of Central Committee of League for Equal Rights, III 112
- deputy to First Russian Duma, III 134
- Bratzlav** (Podolia), Polish deputy from, objects to extension of Jewish rights, I 288
- Nahman of, leader of "Bratzlav Hasidim," I 382 f; II 121 f
- former name for government of Pololia, I 317
- Breslau**, Church Council of, adopts anti-Jewish restrictions, I 47 ff; ratified by Church Council of Kalish, I 57
- visited by Solomon Maimon, I 239
- Brest-Kuyavsk**, name explained, I 75
- anti-Jewish riot in, I 75
- home of Jacob Koppelman, Hebrew author, I 133
- Brest-Litovsk**, name explained, I 75
- Jews of, form important community, I 59, 73
- Jewish community of, represented in Polish Federation of Kahals, I 110; and later in Lithuanian Federation, I 112
- Jewish community of, headed by Saul Udich (Saul Wahl), I 94
- Michael Yosefovich, tax-farmer, native of, I 72
- Mendel Frank, rabbi of, I 73, 104
- supposed former rabbi of, accuses Jews of ritual murder, I 173
- Jews expelled from (1495), I 65
- Jews of, express loyalty to Sigismund I., I 81
- Jews of, protected by Sigismund III., I 94

- Jews of, import goods to Moscow, I 243
- Starosta of, upholds authority of Kahal, I 190
- Kahal of, upbraided by Polish authorities for delaying elections, I 192
- pogroms in (17th century), I 99, 161 (May, 1905), III 119
- Briskin, Arye**, Jewish apostate, informs against Jews of Mstislavl, II 85
- British East Africa**, see **Uganda**
- British Government, The**, see **England**
- Brodski**, Jewish merchant of Kiev, offers to establish trade bank, III 25 f
- Brody** (Galicia), rabbis assembled at, excommunicate Frankists, I 214; and Hasidim, I 237
- Besht** settles in, 223
- Jewish merchants of, settling in Odessa, spread Haskalah, II 133
- rallying-point of pogrom refugees, II 268 f, 321
- Bruchsaal** (Germany), Alexander I., receives Jewish deputation at, I 359, 391
- Bruhl**, Polish Prime Minister, I 180
- Brunn**, capital of Moravia, Jacob Frank settles in, I 219
- Brussels**, newspaper in, defends Russian Government, II 393
- place of publication, II 173
- Bryce, James**, English statesman, addresses London protest meeting against pogroms, II 290
- Buarez**, see **Khwarizm**
- Buchner, Abraham**, Polish assimilationist, II 103 f
- Buckee**, influences Russian-Jewish *intelligencia*, II 209
- Buda** (Ofen), Hungary, Church Council of, passes anti-Jewish restrictions, I 49; ratified by Council of Kalish, I 57
- Budak**, city in Crimea, I 26
- Budberg**, Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs, member of Committee to consider Jewish legislation, I 347
- Budek**, Polish priest, foments anti-Jewish agitation in Cracow, I 56
- Budny, Simon**, Polish theologian, holds disputations with Jews, I 136
- Budushchnost** ("The Future"), Zionist weekly in Russian, III 59
- Buenos Ayres**, Russian Jewish immigrants settle in, II 421
- Bukovina, The**, I 150
- Hasidism gains footing in, II 121

- Bulan**, King of Khazars, embraces Judaism, I 21, 25
- Bulgar**, The, Slav tribe, I 26
- Bulgaria**, on the way to Khazaria, I 25
called upon by Congress of Berlin to grant equality to Jews, II 202
villages in, attacked by Bashibuzuks, II 253, 289
- Bulgarin**, Thaddeus, Russian anti-Semitic writer, II 139
- Bulyghin**, Russian Minister of Interior, receives rescript from Nicholas II. concerning Duma, III 110
Chairman of Committee to discuss Jewish franchise, III 121
recommends denial of Jewish franchise, III 122
"the Bulyghin Constitution" published, III 124
- "**Bund**," League of the Jewish Workingmen of Lithuania, Poland, and Russia, organized (1897), III 56 ff
holds secret conventions, III 56 f
demands Jewish-national rights, III 57
arranges demonstrations, III 68; and strikes, III 130
held responsible for pogroms, III 89
boycotts First Duma, III 134
refuses co-operation with other Jewish parties, III 111, 148; see Revolutionary Movement and Socialism
- Burghers** form estate in Poland, I 44
hostile to Jews, I 70
enter into relations with, I 84 f
receive civil rights from Polish Diet, I 279
form estate in Russia, I 308
restricted in right of transit, I 322
bear burden of conscription, II 23, 29; later relieved, II 200
subject to corporal punishment, II 405
artisans included in estate of, II 405
segregation of Jews as unsettled B. proposed by Nicholas I., 142 f
- Burgomaster**, office of, barred to Jews, II 199, 425
- Burtas**, Slav tribe, I 26
- Butrymovich** (*Polish*, Butrymowicz), Polish deputy, member of Jewish Commission, I 264, 287 f
offers plan of Jewish reform, I 271, 274, 281 ff, 283
his plan used as a model, I 326 f, 385
- Byelaya Tzerkov** (*Polish*, Bialocerkiew), Treaty of (1651), readmits Jews to Ukraina, I 152

- Byzantine Sea, The**, see **Black Sea**
- Byzantium, Empire of**, influences
 Jewish colonies in Tauris,
 I 17 ff
 Jews persecuted in, I 23 f
 Jews emigrate from, to Tauris,
 I 28
 relation of, to Khazars, I 19 ff
 defeats Khazars in Crimea, I
 28
 relation of, to Russia, I 30
 relations of Hasdai Ibn Shap-
 rut with, I 24
- Cabala**, firmly entrenched in Po-
 land, I 134 f
 attracts Solomon Luria, I 126
 esteemed and defended by Joel
 Sirkis, I 130, 133
 vies with Rabbinism, I 199
 study of, forbidden before the
 age of forty, I 214
 adopted by sect of Frankists,
 I 214
 spread by Elijah of Vilna, I
 235
 preached by Nohum of Cher-
 nobyl, I 382
- Cabala, Practical**, name ex-
 plained, I 134
 spreads in Poland, I 134 f,
 202 ff
 introduced from Italy, I 208
 studied and pursued by Besht,
 I 222 f, 224
- Cadets, The**, see **Constitutional Democrats**
- Calahora, Arie-Leib**, Jewish mar-
 tyr in Posen, I 174 f
- Calahora, Mattathiah**, Jewish
 martyr in Cracow, I 164 f
- Calahora, Solomon**, Polish court
 physician, I 132
- Caliphate, Eastern**, or **Caliphate**
 of Bagdad, checks movement
 of Khazars, I 19
 relation of, to Khazars, I 22
- Caliphate, of Cordova**, connected
 by Hasdai ibn Shaprut with
 other lands, I 24
- Calvinists**, in Poland, welcome
 invading Swedes, I 155
- Candia, Delmedigo**, author, born
 in, I 134
- Campe**, German author, work of,
 translated into Hebrew, II
 134
- Canada**, Jewish emigration from
 Russia to, II 421
 immigration of Dukhobortzy,
 Russian sect, to, III 10
- Candidate**, learned degree in Rus-
 sia, term explained, II 165
- Candle Tax**, see **Tax**
- Canterbury, Archbishop of**,
 sends representative to Lon-
 don protest meeting against
 pogroms, II 289
 joins pogrom relief committee,
 II 291

- Cantonists**, or juvenile recruits, name explained, II 19
- institution by Nicholas I., II 19
- sent to outlying Russian provinces, II 24 f
- hunters, or "captors," of, II 23
- martyrdom of, II 24 ff
- forced conversion of, II 26, 45
- institution of, not extended to Poland, II 109
- abolished by Alexander II., II 156; see Conscription, Military Service, Recruits, and Soldiers
- Capistrano**, papal legate, "Scourge of the Jews," I 62
- Capitals**, the Russian (St. Petersburg and Moscow), Jewish first and second guild merchants permitted to visit (1835), II 40
- Jewish physicians, though admitted into Interior, excluded from (1865), III 167
- admission of Jews to schools of, restricted to 3%, II 350
- admission of Jews to universities of, restricted to 2%, III 29
- Capiton**, Christian martyr, I 17
- Carlowitz**, Treaty of (1699), returns Podolia to Poland, I 208
- Carmelites**, Church of, in Posen, holds demonstration against Jews, I 95
- monk, member of, accuses Jews of ritual murder, I 100
- bring law suit against Jews of Posen, I 174
- Caro, Joseph**, author of *Beth-Yoseph*, I 123
- author of *Shulhan-Arukh*, see *Shulhan-Arukh*
- Carpathian Mountains, The**, Besht retires to, I 223
- Casimir the Great** (1333-1370), king of Poland, rejuvenates country, I 50 f
- ratifies and amplifies Jewish charter of Boleslav, I 51 f
- annexes Red Russia, I 42, 53
- grants autonomy to Jews of Lemberg, I 53
- infatuated with Jewess, I 53 f
- charter of, ratified by Vitovt, I 59
- referred to as patron of Jews, II 98
- Casimir IV.**, king of Poland (1447-1492), pursues liberal policy towards Jews, I 61 f
- grants Jews new charter, I 61 f
- attacked by archbishop of Cracow, I 62
- forced to rescind Jewish privileges, I 63
- fines magistracy of Cracow for permitting riots against Jews, I 64
- charter of, ratified by Sigismund II., I 83

- Casimir the Just**, Polish ruler, Jews active as ministers during reign of, I 42
- Caspian Sea**, The, called Sea of Jorjan, I 23
- Khazars settled on shores of, I 19, 26; dislodged from, I 28
- Castellan**, title of Polish official, explained, I 287
- Catherine I.**, empress of Russia, changes and deports Jewish tax-farmer (1727), I 249
- Catherine II.**, The Great (1762-1796), empress of Russia, fictitious ukase of, permitting pogroms, I 183
- refuses to admit Jews into Russia, I 259 f; and into Little Russia, I 260 f
- attitude of, towards Jews of annexed Polish provinces, I 306 ff
- appealed to by the Jews of White Russia, I 311 f
- attitude of, towards Jews, changes for worse, I 314 ff
- lays foundation of Pale of Settlement, I 314 ff
- favors removal of Jews from villages, I 319, 366
- curtails Jewish autonomy, I 319, 366
- endeavors to destroy "Jewish separateness," I 367
- admits Jews to South Russia, I 316
- substitutes term "Yevrey" for "Zhyd," I 320
- Caucasus**, The, ancient trade route leading through, I 23
- Khazars originate from, I 19
- Khazars occupy cities in, I 26
- Jewish agriculturists permitted to settle in (1804), I 342; but not in villages of, I 343
- "Judaizers" deported to, I 403
- ritual murder trial in, II 204
- Censorship**, over Hebrew books, exercised by Council of Four Lands, I 195 f
- Government C. advocated by Polish reformers, I 723, 281
- disregard of, severely punished, II 123
- enforcement of, advocated by I. B. Levinsohn, II 130
- hasidic books subjected to, II 212
- Russian C., hampers Maskilim in Vilna, II 136
- interferes with Jewish press, I 219 f
- suppresses *ha-Emet*, II 223; *Voskhod*, 407, III 98; *Novosti*, II 407
- rages throughout Russia, II 371
- suppresses news of pogroms, II 302, 358; and of Moscow expulsion, II 407

- prevents Russian press from expressing sympathy with Jews, II 387
- forbids Russian press to publish collective statements concerning Jews, II 387
- confiscates pamphlet defending Jews, II 388
- grants full scope to anti-Semitic press, III 31; see also Printing
- Census**, of the Jewish population, in Poland (1764), I 197
- in White Russia (1772), I 307
- in Russia (1816-1819), I 390
- Jews of Vilna released from municipal C. (1682), I 166; see Statistics
- Central Committee**, see Committee
- Champagny**, French Cabinet Minister, conducts negotiations with Polish Government, I 299
- Charles IX.**, French king, succeeded by Henry, Polish king, I 89
- Charles XII.**, Swedish king, invades Poland, I 154 ff, 169
- Charnetzki**, Polish general, massacres Jews, I 155 f
- Charter**, granted to Jews by Leshek, prince of Poland (905), I 40
- issued by Boleslav of Kalish (1264), I 45 ff
- included in Polish code of law (1505), I 71
- ratified and amplified by Casimir the Great, I 51 f; burned, I 61
- issued by Vitovt, grand duke of Lithuania (1388), I 59 f
- granted by Casimir IV. (1447), I 61 f
- granted to Jews of Lithuania by Sigismund I (1540), I 81
- ratified by Sigismund II. (1548), I 83 f
- old Ch's. ratified by Stephen Batory, I 89; by Vishniovetzki, I 160; by Augustus II., I 168; by Augustus III., I 168, 180
- Ch. of Jewish autonomy issued by Sigismund II. (1551), I 105 ff
- Ch. demanding admission of Jews into Russia sent by Sigismund II. to Ivan the Terrible (1550), I 243
- granted to Jews of Cracow by John Casimir (1661), I 159
- "Golden Ch." by Catherine the Great, permitting pogroms, I 183
- Theodor Herzl seeks to obtain Ch. from Sultan, III 84
- offered by British Government for colonization of Uganda, III 84; see also Statute

- Chartoriski (or Chartoryski), Adam**, member of Committee for Amelioration of Jews, I 335
 chairman of Committee to consider Jewish question in Poland, II 89, 91
 opposes liberal project of Novosiltzev, II 93
- Chatzki, Thaddeus**, Polish historian, makes special study of Jewish problem, I 263 ff
 proposes Jewish reforms, I 271, 288
 suggestions of, adopted by others, I 327, 385
- Chatzkin**, Russian-Jewish journalist, II 207
- Chazars**, see Khazars
- Chekhovich, Martin**, Polish theologian, holds disputations with Jews, I 136 f
- Chenstokhov (Polish, Czenstochowa)**, province of Piotrkov, Jacob Frank imprisoned in, I 218 f
 occupied by Russian troops, I 219
 pogrom at, III 36 f
- Cherkaski**, Count, burgomaster of Moscow, favors limitation of Jews in municipal government, II 199
- Cherkassy** (government of Kiev), hasidic center, II 120
- Chernigov (city)**, Jews of, exterminated, I 149
 pogrom at, III 128
 ritual murder at Gorodnya, in neighborhood of, I 247
 home of Isaac, early Russian-Jewish scholar, I 33
 home of Litman Veigin, merchant, II 38
- Chernigov** (province or government), subject to Poland, I 140
 closed to Jews (1649), I 151
 opened again to Jews (1651), I 152
 Jews of, exterminated, I 157
 ceded to Russia (1667), I 159
 few Jews left in, I 246
 made part of Pale (1794), I 317, II 40
 pogroms in localities of, II 257, 267, 315, 411, III 129
 court of, sentences rioters, II 315
 Jews expelled from villages of, II 341
 governor of, misapplies laws relating to Jews, II 341
 governor of, permits Jews to open stores on Christian holidays, II 411
 localities in:
 Gorodnya, I 247
 Karpovich, II 315
 Konotop, II 257
 Nyezhin, II 267, III 129
 Semyonovka, III 129
 Starodub, II 411

- Chernikhovski, Saul**, Hebrew poet, III 64
- Chernobyl** (government of Kiev), hasidic center, I 232, 382
 "dynasty" of, widely ramified, I 382, II 119 ff
- Chernovitz** (Bukowina), Sadagora, in neighborhood of, hasidic center, II 121
- Chernyshev, Count**, governor-general of White Russia, assures Jews of former liberties, I 306 f
 sets apart Jews as an estate, I 309
- Chernyshevski**, radical Russian author, influences Jewish *Intelligencia*, II 207, 209
 effect of, on Lilienblum, 237
- Chersonesus**, near Sevastopol, bishops of, force Jews into baptism, I 17
 scene of rivalry between Jews and Byzantines, I 30
- Chetvertinski, Count**, betrays Jews of Tulchyn, I 147 f
- Chiarini, Abbé**, Polish anti-Semitic writer, II 104
- Chigirin** (province of Kiev), home of Khmelnitzki, I 144
- Chikhachev**, Russian Navy Minister, favors emigration of Jews from Russia, II 419
- Chikhachev**, member of Council of State, favors Jewish franchise, III 12
- Chlenov**, Zionist leader, III 47
- Chmelnicki**, see Khmelnitzki
- Chresta**, name of Greco-Jewish woman, I 15
- Christianity**, propaganda of, in Tauris, I 17 f; among Khazars, I 20
 fusion of Judaism and Ch. attempted by Jewish sect in Russia, II 335; see Church and Conversion
- Chudnov** (Volhynia), young Jews of, martyred, III 117
- Chufut-Kale** (Crimea), harbors old Karaite community, I 35
- Church**, the Greek-Orthodox, persecutes Jews in Byzantine empire, I 18
 Pobyedonostzev reports on affairs of, III 9
- Church**, the Roman-Catholic, in Poland, spreads hatred of Jews, I 44, 47 ff
 gains strength under Yaguello, I 54 f
 opposes Casimir IV., I 62 f
 hostile to Jews during Reformation, I 79, 85 f
 agitates against Jews, I 99 ff
 prompts anti-Jewish legislation of Polish Diets, I 160
 responsible for anti-Jewish riots, I 161
 Jews forbidden to leave houses during Ch. processions, I 160

- Church Council, or Synod, of**
 Breslau (1266), introduces
 canonical laws into Poland,
 I 47 f
 of Buda (1279), passes anti-
 Jewish restrictions, I 49
 of Constance (1420), attended
 by Polish ecclesiastics, I 57
 of Kalish (1420), ratifies
 former canonical enactments
 against Jews, I 57 f
 of Piotrkov (1542), adopts
 "Constitution" against
 Jews, I 82 f, 171
 of Lovich (1720), forbids
 building of new synagogues,
 I 171
 of Plotzk (1733), insists on
 necessity of Jewish suffer-
 ing, I 171
- Chwolson, Daniel**, professor, con-
 verted Jew, member of Com-
 mittee to investigate ritual
 murder, II 151
 disproves ritual murder, II
 205
 member of Executive Commit-
 tee of Society for Diffusion
 of Enlightenment, II 214
- Cilicia (Asia Minor)**, harbors
 Jewish communities, I 14
- Cimmerian Bosphorus**, see Bos-
 porus
- Cincinnati, Max Lilienthal**, rabbi
 of, II 59
- "Circular Jews,"** name ex-
 plained, II 404
 privileges of, withdrawn, II
 428
- City Government**, see Munici-
 palities
- Civil Service**, Jews barred from
 by Church councils, I 49
 Jews in Russian army prom-
 ised admission to, II 29
 possessors of learned degrees
 admitted to, II 165
 Jewish physicians admitted to,
 II 167; barred from, III 27
 Jews in general barred from,
 II 352; III 26; see Tax-
 Farmer
- Clement XIII.**, pope, protects
 Polish Jews, I 180
- Clement XIV.**, see Ganganelli
- Cohen, Jacob Joseph**, disciple of
 Besht, I 227, 230 f
 stirs wrath of Elijah Gaon, I
 237
- Cohen, Joshua Falk**, rabbi of
 Lublin, I 111 f
 presides over Council of Four
 Lands, I 128
 head of talmudic academy in
 Lemberg, I 128
- Cohen, Naphtali**, Polish rabbi,
 engages in magic and enters
 into relations with Sabbat-
 tians, I 204
- Cohen, Nehemiah**, Messianic
 propagandist, I 207

Cohen, Sabbatal, called *Shak*, of Vilna, author of commentary on *Shulhan Arukh*, I 130

issues epistle picturing persecutions of 1648, I 157 f

Colchians, tribe, I 15

Colonies, Jewish, in South Russia, visited by emissary of Baron Hirsch, II 418

pogroms in, II 271; III 35

Colonization, of Jews, undertaken by Russian Government in New (South) Russia, I 352 363 ff; II 70 ff; checked by Government, II 365

in White Russia, II 72

in Siberia, II 71

in Palestine, II 321 f; III 42, 46, 49; promoted by Baron Rothschild, II 375

in United States, II 328, 374

in Russia, proposed by Baron Hirsch, II 415; and by ICA of Paris, III 10; but discouraged by Russian Government, III 24 f

in Argentina, II 416, 421; see Agriculture

Commerce, Jews as mediators in, between Europe and Asia, I 23

Jews engage in, with Slav countries, I 39

Jews in Polish C., I 264, 266 f
Polish kings encourage Jews in, I 85

Sigismund III. confirms Jewish rights of (1588), I 93

Jews restricted in, in Posen, I 74 f; Lemberg, I 75; Cracow, I 98; Vilna, I 99

restrictions in, imposed upon Jews by Polish Diets (1538), I 78; (1763), I 182; (1643), I 99

anti-Jewish restrictions in, demanded by Synod of Piotrkov (1542), I 82; and by Polish journalist (1798), I 281

Russian Government permits Jews to engage in, at fairs of Little Russia and Khar'kov government, I 250 ff

Little Russians plead for admission of Jews in interest of, I 260 f

Jews in Russian C., I 359 f; II 366

depreciated by I. B. Levinsohn, II 126; and other Maskilim, II 137

attitude of Russian Government towards Jewish C., II 185

Jews with higher education granted unrestricted right of (1904), III 98; see also Economic Life and Merchants

Commission, "C. for Jewish Reform," appointed by Polish Diet (1790), I 287 ff

- project of, submitted to Diet and postponed, I 289
 resumes labors but fails, I 290
 Butrymovich, member of, I 264
 project of, adopted by Friesel, Russian governor of Vilna, I 326 f
- Commission**, "High C. for revision of current Laws concerning Jews" ("Pahlen C."), appointed 1883, II 336
 composition of, II 336
 examines material of "Gubernatorial Commissions," II 337, 363
 futility of, II 337
 serves as screen for anti-Jewish legislation, II 338
 discusses projected educational restrictions against Jews ("school norm"), II 339; votes against them, II 349
 conclusions of, II 363 ff
 deprecates Jewish disabilities, II 364, 366
 refers to revolutionary leanings of Jews, II 364 f
 criticize Jewish separation and exploitation, II 365
 describes poverty of Jews, II 366 f
 favors gradual emancipation of Jews, II 368 f
 minority of, favors continuation of repression policy, II 369; supported by Alexander III., II 370
 invites Jewish experts, II 369 f
 disbanded, II 380
- Commissions**, the Gubernatorial, appointed to counteract "injurious influence" of Jews (1881), II 272 ff
 circular of Ignatyev concerning appointment of, II 273; quoted by Cardinal Manning, II 289
 anti-Jewish recommendations of, II 275
 influence Central Committee for Revision of Jewish Question, II 277, 399
 material of, examined and discarded by Pahlen Commission, II 337, 363
 charges of, denied by Jewish Conference, II 307
- Commission**, the Rabbinical, see Rabbinical Commission
- Committee**, to consider Jewish questions, appointed by Polish Government (1815), II 89 f; (1825), II 103 f
 to investigate ritual murder (1864), II 151
 to investigate Brafman's charges against Kahals (1866), II 189 f, 240
 Russo-Jewish C. in London, II 388 f

- Central C. of ICA in St. Petersburg, II 420
- secret C. under Plehve plans Jewish counter-reforms (1891), II 399
- C. of governors and high officials appointed with anti-Semitic instructions (1904), III 93
- Committee for Amelioration of Jews**, called "Jewish Committee" (1802), I 335 ff
- appointment of, causes alarm among Jews, I 336
- invites deputies from Jewish Kahals, I 337
- Nota Shklover invited to assist, I 338
- elaborates plan of Jewish reform, I 338; and submits it to Kahals, I 339
- conflicting tendencies within, I 339 f
- submits report to Alexander I., I 341 f
- supplies basis for Statute of 1804, I 342
- reappointed 1809, advises against expulsion of Jews from villages, I 352 ff, 405
- reappointed 1823, plans to reduce number of Jews in Russia, I 407 f
- drafts principal enactments concerning Jews, II 31
- suggest expulsion of Jews from Courland, II 32
- frame Statute of 1835, II 34
- appointed 1871, II 191
- charged to consider Kahal organization and economic exploitation, II 193 ff
- Committee for Radical Transformation of Jews**, appointed 1840, II 49 f, 157
- presided over by Kisselev, II 50, 157
- considers plan of "assorting" Jews, II 64 ff
- Moses Montefiore permitted to communicate with Nicholas I. through, II 68
- suggests modification of conscription system, II 155
- resuscitated (1856), II 161
- discusses right of residence outside Pale, II 161 ff, 163 ff, 169
- favors opening of Interior to retired soldiers, II 171
- suggests law demanding secular education of teachers and rabbis, II 175
- Committee for Revision of Jewish Question**, appointed 1881, II 277
- suggests unpopulated localities for Jewish settlement, II 285
- plans expulsion of Jews from villages, II 285
- frames "Temporary Laws" of 1882, II 309 ff

- Committee of Ministers** approves measures against "Judaizers," I 402
 approves expulsion of Jews from villages of White Russia, I 406
 instructed to provide relief for expelled Jews, I 406
 advised to stop expulsion, I 407
 formulates function of "Jewish Committee," I 408
 question of admitting artisans into Interior transferred to, II 169 f
 modifies "temporary Rules" of Ignatyev, II 311 f, 318
 objects to pogroms, II 312 f
 advocates school norm for Jews, II 339, 349
 discusses emigration to Argentina, II 419
 entrusted by Nicholas II. with execution of constitutional reforms, III 106
 presided over by Witte, III 107
 discusses Jewish question, III 123; see Council of Ministers
- Committee on Freedom of Conscience**, appointed by Second Duma, favors Jewish emancipation, III 142
- Conference of Jewish Notables**, in St. Petersburg (September, 1881), II 277; (April, 1882), II 304 ff
- refuses to regulate emigration, II 307
 disastrous results of decision of, II 321
- Congregation of New Testament Israelites**, Judeo-Christian sect in Kishinev, II 335
- Congregational Board**, supersedes Kahal in Poland, II 102 f
 (of Warsaw), objects to separate Jewish regiment, II 106
 sends deputation to St. Petersburg to plead for equal rights, II 110
 president of, arrested by Russian Government, II 181
- Congress**, of Aix-la-Chapelle, discusses Jewish question, I 398 f
 of Berlin, demands equal rights for Balkan Jews, II 202
 of Vienna, see Vienna, Congress of
 Jewish C. proposed by Pinsker, II 331
 of Medicine, in Moscow, III 15
 Zionist C., III 41, 44 f, 84 f, 144
 of United States, see United States
 of Poland, see Poland, kingdom of
- Congressional Record**, quoted, II 294, 296, 395

- Conscription**, see Cantonists, Military Service, and Recruits
- Constance**, Synod of, attended by Polish clergy, I 57
- Constantine**, Old, see Constantinov
- Constantine Pavlovich**, grand duke, Russian heir-apparent, II 13, 129
 proclaimed emperor but resigns, II 13
 appointed commander of Poland, II 13, 16, 91
 suggests expulsion of Jews from border zone, I 408
 expels Jews from villages, II 31
 Isaac Baer Levinsohn submits memorandum to, II 129
- Constantinople**, capital of Byzantium, I 17
 captured by Turks, I 35
 patriarchs of, carry on Christian propaganda in Tauris, I 18
 Church of, hopes for conversion of Khazars, I 20
 Spanish exiles in, I 27
 Abydos, seat of Sabbatai Zevi, in neighborhood of, I 206
 Jewish pilgrims on way to Palestine arrive in, I 209
 Ignetyev, Russian ambassador at, II 259
- Constantinov**, Old, or Staro- (Volhynia), Cossack massacre at, I 149
 "protest" against conscription at, II 21 f
- Constitution**, "anti-Jewish C.," passed by Polish Diet of 1538, I 77 f
 adopted by Piotrkov Church Council of 1542, I 82 f
 Polish C. of May 3, 1791, 289 f
 introduced by Napoleon into duchy of Warsaw, I 398
 violated by Government of duchy, I 299 ff
 "Jewish C." of 1804, I 342 ff
- Constitutional Democratic Party**, the (Cadets), in Russia, mistrusts Government, III 130
 forms majority in First Duma, III 135
 loses in Second Duma, III 142
 weak in Third Duma, III 153
 Jews in, III 119
 Vinaver, leader of, III 134
 majority of Jewish deputies belong to, III 135
- Contra-Talmudists**, name for Frankists, I 214 f
- Conversion**, of Jews, to Christianity, recommended by patriarch of Constantinople and bishop of Bosporus, I 18, 20
 forced upon Jews of Byzantium, I 23

- forcible C. of children punished
 by Polish law (1264), I 47
 of Jewish Messianic pilgrims
 in Palestine, I 210
 of Jacob Frank and followers,
 I 217 f; deplored by Besht,
 I 229
 carried on through military
 service, II 26 f, 45, 156 f
 feared by Jews of Vilna, II 54 f
 endeavors of Russians towards,
 stopped, II 173 f
 of Haskalah pioneers, II 132
 of disillusioned *intelligenza*,
 II 327
 as result of expulsions in St.
 Petersburg, II 344; and
 Moscow, II 425; see Society
 of Israelitisch Christians
 C. epidemic in Berlin, I 388
 forced by Ivan the Terrible
 upon Jews of Vitebsk, I 154;
 and upon Jews of Polotzk,
 I 243
 Russian Government aims at,
 I 396 ff; II 44 f, 188
 of Khazars, to Judaism, I 20
 attempted C. of Vladimir, I 30
 of Turkish Sabbatians, to
 Mohammedanism, I 210
Converts, to Christianity, per-
 mitted by King John Casi-
 mir to return to Judaism, I
 151
 accuse Jews of ritual murder,
 I 173 f; II 73, 80
 inform against Hebrew books,
 II 42
 in city of Saratov, II 150
 individual converts:
 Abraham Yosefovich, I 73
 Berthenson, II 214
 Bogrov, II 242
 Brafman, II 187 ff
 Briskin, II 85
 Chwolson, II 151, 205, 214
 Efron-Litvin, III 38
 Grudinski, II 80
 Horvitz, II 202, 244
 Kronenberg, II 178
 Nyevalkhovich, I 388
 Peretz, I 388
 Pfefferkorn, II 189
 Priluker, II 335
 Savitzki, II 73
 Serafinovich, I 173 f
 See also, Judaizers
Cordova, Caliphate of, see Cali-
 phate
Coronation Diets, see Diets,
 Coronation
Cosmopolitanism, advocated by
 Jewish socialists, II 222; by
 Levanda, II 240; by Bogrov,
 II 241
Cossacks, name explained, I 142
 origin of, I 142 ff
 Ukrainian C's., I 142
 Zaporozhian C's., see Zaporo-
 zhians
 massacre Jews (1637), I 144;
 (1648), I 144 ff, 154, 246

- exclude Jews from their country (1649), I 151
 readmit Jews to their territory (1651), I 152
 ally themselves with Russia (1654), I 152 ff
 invade Polish territories, I 154, 156, 244 ff
 rise against Poles and Jews, I 182 ff
 Jews visit territory of, despite prohibition, I 246
 C's. of Little Russia plead for admission of Jews, I 250
 See also Khmelnitzki
Costanda, military governor of Moscow, inaugurates expulsion of Jews, II 401
Council, Church C., see Church Council
Council of Ministers, in duchy of Warsaw, opposes Jewish emancipation, I 299
 in Russia, Nicholas I. appends resolution to report of, II 62
 reports to Tzar on Jewish agricultural colonization, II 71
 recommends appointment of "High Commission" on Jewish question, II 336
 passes anti-Jewish laws, II 338
 not consulted in expulsion from Moscow, II 402
 favors grant of franchise to Jews, III 122
 presided over by Witte, II 125
 suggests moderate Jewish reforms to Nicholas II., II 141
Council of State, in Poland, discusses Jewish question, II 93 f
 formation of, in Russia, I 335
 bars Jews from Russian Interior, I 316
 condemns expulsion of Jews from White Russian villages, I 407; II 34
 objects to further expulsions, II 34 f
 discusses right of residence outside Pale, II 35 f, 161 ff, 163 ff, 169 f
 recommends alleviation in military service, II 36
 disagrees on expulsion from Kiev, II 36 f
 passes Statute of 1835, II 37
 receives memoranda on Jewish question, II 38
 discusses Jewish question and suggests measures (1840), II 47 ff
 discusses exact limits of Pale, II 70
 acquits Velizh Jews of ritual murder charge, II 81 ff
 convicts Jews of Saratov, II 152
 discusses Jewish separatism, under influence of Brafman's charges, II 190

- recommends appointment of Commission of Amelioration of Jews, II 191, 193
- material on Jewish question prepared for, II 336
- plans of Pahlen Commission said to have been brought before, II 320
- disregarded by Alexander III. in issuing "Temporary Rules," II 312, 386; in passing anti-Jewish restrictions, II 338; in passing school norm, II 349; in expulsion from Moscow, II 402
- confirms exclusion of Jews from Zemstvos, II 386
- members of, favor Jewish franchise, III 122
- Courland**, added to Pale, I 321
- Jews settled in, I 341
- new Jewish settler expelled from, II 32
- Lipman Levy, Russian financial agent, native of, I 248
- Mordecai Aaron Ginzburg, Hebrew writer, resident of, II 133
- Nisselovich, Duma deputy for, III 153
- Courts**, Jews of Poland exempted from jurisdiction of municipal and ecclesiastic C's., I 45 f, 51 f, 84, 94, 103
- cases between Jews tried by royal C's., or Voyevoda C. (in Lithuania, Starosta C.), I 45 f, 51 f, 59 f
- "Jewish Judge," Polish official nominated by Jews, attached to Voyevoda C., I 46, 52, 192
- Voyevoda C. tries cases between Jews and Christians, I 84, 191; acts as Court of Appeals, I 191; Kahal elders attached to, I 84
- tax-farmer Yosko and employees placed under jurisdiction of royal C., I 71
- Jews on noble estates placed under C's. of nobles, I 84
- Municipal C's. claim jurisdiction over Jews, I 93 f
- ritual murder cases tried by C's. without proper jurisdiction, I 95 f
- civil and partly criminal cases between Jews tried by C. of rabbis and Kahal elders, I 83, 105 f
- Kahal C. granted right of imposing *herem* and other penalties, I 73, 105 f
- Kahal C. granted exclusive jurisdiction in cases between Jews, I 191
- Kahal C. consists of rabbis as judges and Kahal elders as jury, I 191
- Council of Four Lands acts as C., I 111; appoints provincial judges, I 111

- Kahal C. of Vilna issues *herem* against Hasidim (1772), I 237
- Kahals recognized as C's. by Russian Senate (1776), I 309
- cases between Jews tried by C's. of District and Gubernatorial Kahals, I 309
- Gubernatorial Kahals act as C's. of Appeal, I 309
- cases between Jews and Christians tried by municipal C's., I 309
- Senate questions legality of special Jewish C's. (1782), I 310
- Jews admitted to membership in municipal C's. (1783), I 310
- cases between Jews tried by municipal C's. (1786), I 313
- Jews represented on municipal C's. by elective jurymen, I 313
- Kahal C's. limited to spiritual affairs (1786), I 313; (1795), I 319
- Jews of Lithuania plead for preservation of Kahal C's. (1795), I 320
- Statute of 1804 places Jews under jurisdiction of Russian C's., I 344
- Jews continue to resort to Kahal C., I 367; see Kahal, Jewish Judge, and Rabbi Cox, Samuel S., of New York. protests in Congress against pogroms, II 294 ff
- Cracow, leading city of Little Poland, I 42, 110, 196
- capital of Western Galicia, I 53
- election diets held in, I 98
- superseded as Polish capital by Warsaw, I 85
- conquered by Swedes, I 154
- surrendered by Shlakhta, I 155
- Province of, annexed by Austria, I 297
- Jewish refugees from Crusades seek shelter in, I 41
- Jewish Community of, represented on Council of Four Lands, I 110
- Jewish communities in Province of, destroyed, I 156
- Jewish charter ratified by Casimir the Great, in, I 51
- Jews of, receive charter from John Casimir, I 159
- anti-Jewish riots in, I 56 f, 63 f, 75 f, 102, 161, 166
- Jews of, subjected to commercial restrictions, I 74 f, 98
- restrictions for Jews of, demanded by Church Synod, I 82
- ghetto established in, I 64, 85
- ritual murder trial in, I 164 f
- host trial in, I 101 f

- "Judaizing" tendencies in, I 79 f
- anti-Semitic writers in, 96 f
- Oleshnitzki, archbishop of, I 62
- Gamrat, bishop of, I 79
- Kmita, Voyevoda of, I 76
- Hebrew printing-press in, I 131, 195
- Delacruta, Cabalist, resident of, I 134
- Horowitz, Isaiah, Cabalist, studies in, I 135
- Pollak, Jacob, head of yeshibah in, I 122
- Spira, Nathan, head of yeshibah in, I 135
- Rabbis of:
- Asher, I 104
 - Fishel, I 105, 132
 - Heller, I 158
 - Isserles, I 123
 - Kaidanover, Samuel, I 200
 - Meir of Lublin, I 129
 - Meisels, II 179
 - Peretz, I 104
 - Sirkis, I 133
- Crémieux, Adolf, president of *Alliance Israélite*, corresponds with Lilienthal, II 67
- petitions Alexander II. on behalf of Jews accused of ritual murder, II 153
- criticized by governor-general of Kiev, II 194
- Crimea, The, name defined, I 13
- Greeks in, I 13 f
 - conquered by Khazars, I 19 f
 - last refuge of Khazars, I 28
 - known as Khazaria, I 28 f
 - ruled by Pechenegs and Polovtzi, I 29
 - conquered by Tatars, I 33
 - Tataric Khanate of, I 35 f, 142
 - Tatars of, ally themselves with Cossacks, I 143 ff
 - Kaffa, Genoese colony in, I 33 f
 - list of cities in, I 26
 - visited by Petahiah of Ratisbon, I 33
 - Taman peninsula, in neighborhood of, I 23
 - Jews in, I 14 ff, 33 ff
 - Karaite communities in, I 35
 - Jews of, settle in Kiev, I 30; in Lithuania, I 35
 - expelled Lithuanian Jews emigrate to, I 65
 - Jewish State in, suggested, I 412; see Tavrida, government of
- Crimean War, stops plan of Jewish "Assortment," II 143
- effect of, on Jewish situation II 149 f, 154
- Crown, the, signifying Poland as contrasted with Lithuania, I 72, 88, 110, 113, 127, 162, 193

- Crown Rabbis** ("official," or *kazyonny*, rabbis), name explained, II 176
 forced upon congregations, II 176
 act as Government agents
 See Rabbis
- Crown Schools**, see Schools
- Crusades**, the, stimulate immigration of Jews into Poland, I 33, 41
 give rise to Teutonic order, I 63
 victims of Cossack massacres (1648) compared with those of, I 156
- Cyril**, Christian missionary, disputes with Jews, I 18
- Daitzelman**, Jewish merchant in Nizhni-Novgorod, victim of pogrom, II 361
- Dakota**, North and South, Jewish agricultural colonies in, II 374
- Damascus**, ritual murder trial of, II 68
- Daniel Apostol**, Hetman of Little Russia, pleads for admission of Jewish salesman, I 250
- Dantzic**, annexed by Prussia, I 292
- Danube**, The, Jewish emigration form provinces of, to Poland, I 41
- Dardanelles**, The, commerce between Genoa and Crimea through, I 34
- Darkest Russia**, periodical published in England, II 381
- Darshanim** (Preachers), in Poland, I 201 f
- Darwin**, Charles, influences Russian-Jewish *intelligenza*, II 209
- Dashevski**, Pincus, assaults Krushevan to avenge Kishinev massacre, III 81 f
 trial of, induces Plehve to forbid Zionism, III 82
 receives greetings of Russian-Jewish convention, III 132
- Davidov**, Russian military leader, praises Jews, I 357
- Davis**, Noah, Judge, speaks at New York protest meeting, II 297
- Decembrists** (*Russian*, Dyekabrist), Russian revolutionaries, name explained, I 410
 suppressed by Nicholas I., II 13
 attitude of, towards Jews, I 409 ff
- Dekert**, John, mayor of Warsaw, champion of burgher class, I 286
- Delacruta**, Mattathiah, Italian Cabalist in Cracow, I 134

- Delmedigo, Joseph Solomon**, called *Yashar*, of Candia, arraigns Polish Jews for opposing secular culture, I 134
- Dembrovski**, Polish bishop, arranges disputations between Frankists and Talmudist, I 214 f
orders burning of Talmud, I 215
- Demiovka**, suburb of Kiev, pogrom at, II 254 f
- De non Tolerandis Iudaeis**, right of excluding Jews
in Warsaw (and other Polish cities), I 85
in Kiev, I 94 f
abolished in Zhitomir, Vilna (and other cities), II 172
abolished throughout Poland (1862), II 181
- Denis**, Greek-orthodox priest, converted to Judaism, I 36
- Department of Law**, part of Council of State, considers Jewish legislation, II 34 ff
- Deputation of the Jewish People, The**, created by Alexander I., I 392 ff
disbanded in 1825, I 395
instrumental in stopping ritual murder trial in Grodno, II 74
induces Alexander I. to veto prohibition of liquor trade in Poland, II 94
- Derbent**, see Bab Al-Abwab
- Diaspora**, Jewish, neglected by Zionism, III 52
as conceived by National-Cultural Autonomism, III 53 ff
as conceived by Russian-Jewish historians, II 65
- Diet, The**, in Poland, term defined, I 76
controlled by Shlakhta, I 58, 77, 160
authority of, undermined by *liberum veto*, I 92, 163
Jews represented at, by "syn-dics," I 111
anti-Jewish tendency of, I 76 f, 160
preceded by anti-Jewish propaganda, I 165
counteracts benevolent intentions of kings, I 160
censures King Sobieski for interest in Jews, I 167
condemns anti-Jewish riots, I 166 f, 171
fixes amount of Jewish head-tax, I 194
granted right to elect government, I 263
Jews admitted to Warsaw during sessions of, I 268 ff
re-established in duchy of Warsaw, I 298
Coronation D's., name explained, I 98
Jewish privileges ratified at, I 98, 160, 168

Election D's., name explained,
I 98

Individual Diets, according
to years:

1423 (of Varta), restricts
financial operations of
Jews, I 58

1454 (of Nyeshava), re-
scinds Jewish privileges,
I 63

1496 (of Piotrkov), con-
firms restrictions of
Nyeshava Diet, I 64

1521 (of Piotrkov), limits
commerce of Lemberg
Jews, I 75

1538 (of Piotrkov), passes
anti-Jewish "constitu-
tion," I 77; confirmed
by Diet of 1562, 1565
and 1768, I 87

1548 (of Piotrkov), Sig-
ismund II. ratifies Jew-
ish charter at, I 83

1618, discusses passion-
ately Jewish question, I
97

1643 (of Warsaw), re-
stricts profits of Jews,
I 99

1658 (of Warsaw), expels
sectarians from Poland,
I 91

1670 (of Warsaw), re-
stricts financial opera-
tions of Jews, I 160

1693 (of Grodno), ar-
raigns Bezalel, Jewish
tax-farmer, I 167

1717 (of Warsaw), in-
creases Jewish head tax,
I 169; protests against
anti-Jewish riots, I 171

1740, rejects resolution
turning Jews into serfs,
I 170

1764 (of Warsaw), alters
system of Jewish taxa-
tion, I 181, 197; pro-
hibits conventions of
Jewish District elders,
I 198

1768 (of Warsaw), renews
commercial restrictions
of 1538, I 182, 267;
admits Jews temporarily
to Warsaw, I 268

1788-1791, see Diet, Quad-
rennial

1808, elections to, force
Government to take up
Jewish question, I 299

1818, first D. of kingdom
of Poland, displays anti-
Jewish attitude, II 96,
99

1831, releases Jews from
conscription, II 107

Diet, The Quadrennial, or Great
(1788-1791), name explain-
ed, I 263

reflects liberal ideas, I 278

- elaborates modern constitution, I 263
 equalizes burgher class, I 278
 discusses agrarian question, I 279
 prepares for struggle with Russia, I 279
 attitude of, "towards Jewish question, I 263 ff, 279 ff, 285, 288 ff
 refers Jewish question to special commission, I 264, 279, 287, 327
 finance committee of, reports on Jews, 263 ff
 Chatzki, Polish historian, member of, I 263, 288
 Butrymovich, champion of Polish Jews, member of, I 264, 274, 280 f, 285, 289
 Chatzki and Butrymovich submit proposals to, I 271
 Jews admitted to Warsaw during, I 285
 notified of anti-Jewish demonstration in Warsaw, I 286; and investigates it, I 287
 literature centering around, I 279 ff
 appealed to by Simeon Wolfovich against Kahals, I 276
 project of Jewish reforms submitted to king during, I 284
 Dietines, the, Polish provincial diets, I 76
 provide occasions for anti-Jewish riots, I 170
 serve as pattern for Jewish D., I 113, 196 f
 Jewish D., called officially "synagogues," I 196
 Dilke, Sir Charles, English Under-Secretary of State, interpellated about pogroms, II 262
 Dillon, Eliezer, army purveyor, represents Jews before Russian Government, I 358
 member of Deputation of Jewish People, I 392 f
 Disabilities, see Restrictions
 Disputations, religious, between Jews and Christians, I 136 f
 between Frankists and orthodox Jews, I 214 f, 216 f; attended by Besht, I 229
 Disraeli, see Beaconsfield
 Distillers, Jewish, admitted to *Russian Interior, II 170
 Distilling, see *Propinatzya*
 Dlugosh, Jan, called Longinus, Polish historian, quoted, I 57
 Dnieper, the, river, Petahiah of Ratisbon reaches banks of, I 33
 Jews disappear from left bank of, I 157
 Jews decimated on right bank of, I 157

- southern basin of, subject to Poland, I 140
- left bank of, called Little Russia, ceded to Russia, I 159
- Jews penetrate into Little Russia "from other side of," I 253
- Cossacks beyond Falls of, I 143 ff
- uprising against Poles and Jews on right bank of, I 182
- Cossack army "on both sides of," plead for admission of Jewish salesmen, I 250
- central river of Pale, I 317
- See Moghilev on the Dnieper
- Dniester**, The, river, Moghilev on, I 98
- Dobrolubov**, Russian critic, influences Jewish *intelligenza*, II 207, 209
- Doctor**, official title of rabbis in ancient Poland, I 72, 104, 109
- Dolgoruki**, Count, governor-general of Moscow, friendly to Jews, II 400 f
- Dombrovski**, Polish revolutionary leader, I 303
- Domestics**, Christian, the keeping of, prohibited by Church Council of Breslau (1266), I 49
- by Synod of Piotrkov (1542), I 82
- by "Lithuanian Statute" (1566), I 87
- by Diet of Warsaw (1670), I 160
- prohibition of, in Russia, suggested by Dyerzhavin, I 333, and Golitzin, 404
- prohibited by Russian Senate (1820), I 404 f
- prohibited for permanent employment (1835), II 40
- Christians of Pereyaslav call upon Jews to refrain from, II 266
- Pobyedonostzev deplores influence of Jews on their D., III 9
- Domestics**, Jewish, outside Pale. Jewish merchants allowed limited number of, II 162
- Jewish university graduates allowed two, II 166, 344
- fictitious D. in St. Petersburg, II 344 f
- Dominican Order**, the, church of, in Posen, collects regular fine from Jews, I 55
- priest of, in Cracow, causes execution of Jews, I 164
- general of, in Rome, calls upon head of, in Cracow, to defend Jews, I 165
- Don**, the, river, Khazars move towards, I 19
- Territory of D. Army closed to Jews, II 346

- Dondukov-Korsakov**, governor-general of Kiev, criticizes Jews, II 193 f
- Drabkin**, rabbi of St. Petersburg, reports conversation with Ignatyev, II 305
- Drenteln**, governor-general of Kiev, ferocious Jew-baiter, abets pogroms, II 252, 254
recommends severe repression of Jews, II 276
upbraids Jews of Balta, II 316 f
misconstrues "Temporary Rules" against Jews, II 341
- Dresden**, Jews of, appeal to Augustus III. against ritual murder libel, I 176
- Dress, Christian**, forbidden to Jews by "Lithuanian Statute" (1566), I 87
deprecated by rabbis (1607), I 112
prescribed for Jewish visitors to Russian Interior (1835), II 40
prescribed for Jewish members of municipalities (1804), I 345
German D. adopted by "Berliners," I 384
Russian D. preferred by Jews to German D., I 350; see Dress, Jewish
- Dress, Jewish** (hat or badge), prescribed by Synod of Breslau (1266), I 48
by Synod of Buda (1279), I 49
by Synod of Kalish (1420), I 57
by Diet of Piotrkov (1538), I 78
by Synod of Piotrkov (1542), I 83
abandoned by some Jews in Warsaw, I 300 f
defended by Polish rabbi, I 283
Jews of Warsaw demand equal rights as reward for discarding, I 385 f
prohibition of, recommended by Butrymovich, I 281; by Polish nobility of Lithuania, I 326; by Friesel, governor of Vilna, I 327; and Dyerzhavin, I 333
tax imposed on, in Russia (1843), I 110; extended to Poland (1845), I 110
Russian Council of State finds principal source of Jewish separatism in (1840), II 48; and suggests prohibition, II 49; but modifies view (1870), II 190 f
governors-general advised of impending prohibition of, II 66
prohibition of, enacted (1850), I 144; and extended to female attire (1851), I 144
prohibition of, remains ineffective, I 144 f

- Alexander II. displeased with, in Poland, II 190
- luxury in, forbidden (1566), I 87; deprecated by Abraham Hirshovich, I 284; by I. B. Levinsohn, II 128; by Christians of Pereyaslav, II 266
- white D. favored by early "Hasidim," I 209, 231, 237; objected to by assembly of rabbis, I 237; see Dress, Christian
- Dreyfus Affair**, the, exploited by Russian press, III 32
- witnessed by Doctor Herzl, III 42
- Druskeniki** (government of Grodno), Conference of "Lovers of Zion" at, II 377
- Drusus**, name of Greek Jew, I 15
- Dubnow, S. M.**, author of present work, quoted, I 114, 163, 235
- champions national rejuvenation of Judaism in Russia, II 327
- formulates theory of Spiritual Nationalism, or National-Cultural Autonomism, III 52
- member of central committee of League for Equal Rights, III 42
- editor of periodical *Yevrey-skaya Starina*, III 160
- Dubossary**, ritual murder libel at, III 70 f
- pogrom at, frustrated by Jews, III 71
- Dubrovin**, head of Black Hundred, received by Nicholas II., III 149
- Dubrovna** (government of Moghilev), Voznitzin, captain of navy, converted to Judaism at, I 252
- Duchy of Warsaw**, see Warsaw, Duchy of
- Dukhobortzy**, Russian sect, flees from persecution to Canada, III 10
- Duma**, Imperial Russian, plans for, formulated, III 122; and published, III 124
- manifesto of October 17 promises establishment of, III 127
- First D.*, elections to, III 133
- League for Equal Rights participates in elections to, III 133 f
- Zionists participate in elections to, III 145
- boycotted by Left, III 134
- Jewish deputies to, III 134
- Jewish question before, III 135 ff
- pogroms discussed by, III 126, 136 ff
- appoints commission to investigate Bialystok pogrom, III 137

- adopts resolution condemning pogroms, III 139
 dissolved, III 139
Second D., convoked, III 141
 only three Jewish deputies elected to, III 142
 Jewish question referred by, to committee, III 142
 dissolved, III 142
Third D., called the Black, III 153
 only two Jewish deputies elected to, III 153
 violently anti-Semitic, III 153 ff
 discusses Beilis case, III 165
Fourth D., anti-Semitic agitation in Poland during elections to, III 167
 Jewish D. deputies co-operate with joint Jewish Council in St. Petersburg, III 148
- Dunaigrod** (Podolia), ritual murder trial at, I 178
- Durnovo**, Russian official, investigates ritual murder trial at Saratov, II 150
- Durnovo**, Russian Minister of Interior, fanatic reactionary, II 379
 bars Jews from local self-government (*Zemstvos*), II 386; and municipal self-government, II 425
 suggests expulsion of Jews from Moscow, II 402
- revokes decree of 1880, causing expulsion of "circular Jews," II 428
 continues in office under Nicholas II., III 9, 16
 member of Witte cabinet, III 31
- Dusyaty** (government of Kovno), pogrom at, III 115
- Dvina**, river, Jews drowned by Russian troops in, I 243
- Dyekabristy**, see Decembrists
- Dyelanov**, Minister of Public Instruction, decrees "school norm," limiting admission of Jews to schools and universities, II 349 ff
 applies school norm leniently, III 27 f
- Dyen** ("The Day"), Russian-Jewish weekly, II 218, 220, 238
- Dyerzhavin**, Gabriel, member of Russian Senate, becomes interested in Jewish question, I 327
 meets Jews for first time on tour to White Russia, I 328
 meets modernized Jewish physician in White Russia, I 386
 pursues anti-Jewish purpose on tour, I 329 f
 prepares elaborate "Opinion" on Jews, I 330 ff

- appointed Minister of Justice, I 335
- "Opinion" of, studied by Committee for Amelioration of Jews, I 335 f
- retires, I 337
- example of, followed later in White Russia, 405
- Earlocks** (*Peies*), discarded by modernized Jews, I 384
- cutting off of, recommended in Poland, I 385
- wearing of, prohibited by Nicholas I., II 144 f
- See Beards
- Easter**, Russian, duration of, II 249
- season of pogroms, II 248, 299; III 34, 71 ff, 96 f, 114 f, 134
- Economic** life, of Jews, in Poland, I 42, 44 f, 67 f, 160, 264 ff, 270
- in Polish Silesia, I 42
- in Lithuania, I 60
- in Russia, I 353 f, 359 ff
- in White Russia, I 310 ff; II 14
- in Russian South-west, II 193 f
- in Kiev, II 264
- undermined under Nicholas I., II 70, 72
- improved under Alexander II., II 185 f
- E. importance of Russian Jews pointed out by Vorontzov, II 64 f; by Pahlen Commission, II 366; and by foreign press, II 408
- Russian Jews accused of E. exploitation, II 193 f, 270 ff
- restricted under Alexander III., II 318, 346 ff
- E. misery of Russian Jews, II 318, 366 f
- collapse of, under Nicholas II., III 22 ff
- in America, II 374
- E. boycott in Poland, III 166 ff
- Edels**, Samuel, called Maharsho, famous Polish talmudist, I 129 f
- Education**, Jewish, see Heder and Yeshibah
- modernization of, in Poland, urged by Kalmansohn, I 385; by David Friedländer, II 90; by Polish assimilationists, II 101
- criticized by Russian Council of State, II 48
- negative effects of, pointed out by author, II 113
- national E. demanded by Zionist Convention at Minsk, III 45
- fostered by Society for Diffusion of Enlightenment, III 160
- autonomy of, demanded by League for Equal Rights, III 112

- progress of, in Palestine, III 148
 See School
- Education, Secular, promotion**
 of, among Jews, urged by Russian dignitaries, I 327, 333
 championed by Frank, Jewish physician, I 331; by I. B. Levinsohn, II 128; and by Maskilim of Vilna, II 137
 encouraged by Alexander I., I 344 f; by Nicholas I., II 20, 57 f; and by Alexander II., II 163 ff, 166, 175, 216
 shunned by Russian Jews, I 350, 380; II 48, 53 ff, 175
 spreads under Alexander II., II 176 f, 216
 promoted by Society for Diffusion of Enlightenment
 spread of, among Jews feared by Russian authorities, II 339, 348
 disparaged in general by Pobyedonostzev, II 348
- Educational Restrictions, demanded by Alexander III., II 349**
 issued by Minister of Instruction (1887), II 350
 disastrous effects of, II 350 f
 compel Jewish youth to study abroad, II 351; III 31
 stimulate emigration, II 373
 applied with increasing rigor under Nicholas II., III 27 ff
- abolished in institutions of higher learning (1905), III 124
 restored (1907), III 152
 placed on Statute books in 1908, III 157 f
 See Enlightenment, School, and University
- Efron-Litvin, converted Jew, anti-Semitic playwright, III 38**
- Egypt, emigration of Jews from, into Tauris, I 16**
 Sabbatian propaganda in, I 205
- Eibeschütz, upheld by Polish rabbis in struggle with Emden, I 204**
- Einhorn, David, modern Jewish writer, III 162**
- Eisenbaum, Anton, Polish-Jewish assimilationist, head of rabbinical seminary, II 103**
- Eisenmenger, anti-Jewish writer, II 104**
- Eisenstadt, Michael, represents Kahals before Russian Government, I 393**
- Ekaterinoslav, see Yekaterinoslav**
- Ekron, Jewish colony in Palestine, II 375**
- Eliezer, Bohemian, scholar, quoted, I 43**
- Elijah, the prophet, believed to associate with Besht, I 228**
 Russian church festival in honor of, II 358

Elijah of Vilna, called the Gaon, idolized by rabbis of Lithuania and other countries, I 235 f

familiar with Cabala, I 235

studied secular sciences, I 235 f

tolerant towards pursuit of secular sciences, I 381

avoids *pilpul* and cultivates method of textual analysis, I 236

introduces method into yeshibahs of Lithuania, I 380; particularly into yeshibah of Volozhin, I 381

fragmentary nature of literary work of, I 236

rigorist in religious practice, I 236

opposes Hasidism, I 236

causes issuance of *herem* against Hasidism, I 237

reaffirms *herem*, I 373

checks growth of Hasidism in Vilna, I 372

refuses to see Shneur Zalman, I 374 f

death of, I 375

Hasidim of Vilna rejoice over death of, I 375

Elimelech of Lizno, hasidic leader, I 232

Elizabeth Petrovna, Russian empress (1741-1761), persecutes non-Orthodox, I 254

decrees expulsion of Jews from entire Russian empire (1727), I 255

refuses plea of Ukrainians and Livonians for admission of Jews, I 257

pens famous resolution against Jews (1743), I 257

decrees again unconditional expulsion of Jews (1744), I 257 f

dismisses Sanches, Jewish court physician, I 258

policy of, followed by Catherine II., I 259

Elizabethgrad, see Yelisavetgrad

Emancipation (Equal Rights), introduced by Napoleon into duchy of Warsaw, I 298

not applied to Jews, I 298 f

Warsaw Jews apply to Polish Government for, I 299

opposed by Polish Council of Ministers, I 299

suspended by duke of Warsaw for ten years, I 299

17 Jews of Warsaw apply for, as reward for assimilation, I 300

refused by Polish Minister of Justice, I 300 f

representatives of Warsaw community plead for, I 301 f

opposed by Polish Senate, I 302

Warsaw Jews apply to Nicholas I. for, II 110

- granted to Jews of Poland by Alexander II (1862), II 181 ff
- promised to Jews by early Russian revolutionaries, I 413
- prominent St. Petersburg Jews apply to Alexander II. for, II 159 f
- recommended by Stroganov, governor-general of New Russia, II 168 f
- advocated by Russian-Jewish press, II 219 f, 238, 332
- claimed by Young Israel, heterodox Jewish sect, II 334
- recommended by Pahlen Commission, II 364, 368
- urged by Guildhall meeting in London, II 391
- demanding by Russian lawyers and writers for all citizens, III 105
- partial E. promised by Russian Government, III 106
- unrestricted E. demanded by Russian Jews, III 108 ff
- demanding by Society for Diffusion of Enlightenment, III 111
- urged by League for Equal Rights, III 111 f
- adopted for all citizens by First Duma, III 135
- bill providing for E. of Jews referred by First Duma to Committee, III 137 f
- opposed by Nicholas II., III 141
- bill providing for, passed by Committee of Second Duma, III 142
- forms platforms of Jewish people's group, III 146 f
- See League for Attainment of Equal Rights
- Emden, Jacob**, opposed by Polish rabbis in fight with Eibeshütz, I 204
- Emigration**, of Jews, from Lithuania, prevented by Sigismund I. (1540), I 81
- from Poland, caused by Khmelnitzki massacres (1648 ff), I 157
- from Russia, caused by persecutions and pogroms, II 268, 327 ff, 413, 420; III 96
- causes shortage of Jewish recruits, II 356
- prompts imposition of military fine, II 373, 414
- stimulated by educational restrictions, I 373
- welcomed by Russian Government as solution of Jewish problem, II 419 f; III 10
- encouraged by Russian Government, II 285, 414, 417 f, 420

- old Russian law prohibiting E.
not enforced, II 69, 285
- Plehve promises to support E.,
III 83
- to Algiers, proposed by French
Jews, II 69
- to Argentina, II 413, 416 ff,
419 f
- to Canada, II 421
- to Palestine, I 269 f; II 321 f,
419 ff, 421 ff; advocated by
Poale Zion, III 145; im-
portance of, recognized by
Russian Jewry, III 54, 147
- to United States, II 297 f, 320 f,
373 ff, 409, 413, 420 f; III 96,
104; calls forth protest of
U. S. Government, II 396,
importance of, recognized by
Russian Jewish parties, III
54, 145, 147
- Emigration, Regulation of**, at-
tempted by emigrant
societies, II 297 f
- urged by Mandelstamm and
part of Jewish press, II 298
- feared by prominent St. Peters-
burg Jews, II 298
- deprecated by *Voskhod* as sub-
versive of emancipation, II
298 f
- rejected by Jewish Conference
in St. Petersburg (April,
1882), II 207; disastrous re-
sults of rejection, II 420
- proposed by Baron Hirsch, II
416, 419
- sanctioned by Russian Govern-
ment, II 420
- Encyclopedists**, French, praise
polemical treatise of Isaac
Troki, I 138
- England, represented at Con-
gress of Aix-la-Chapelle, I
398
- Parliament in, discusses pog-
roms, II 262 f, 281 f, 287 ff,
388 ff
- prominent men in, approach
Nicholas I. on behalf of Rus-
sian Jews, II 63
- Priluker, Russian Jew, mis-
sionary in, II 335
- Russian-Jewish students in, II
351
- offers Uganda to Zionists, III
85
- See London
- Enlightenment**, see Haskalah
- Equal Rights**, see Emancipation
- Ephes-Dammim**, name of bib-
lical place, used as book
title, II 131
- Ephesus**, city in Asia Minor,
Jewish community in, I 14
- Epstein, Samuel**, represents Jews
before Russian Government,
I 393
- Eshet Hayil**, term explained, II
113
- Estate, Real**, see Property, Real
- Estherka**, concubine of Casimir
the Great, I 53 f

- Euclid**, geometry of, translated into Hebrew, I 381
Euler, German mathematician, criticizes dismissal of Jewish court physician in St. Petersburg, I 258
Europe, Eastern, beginnings of Diaspora in, I 13
Euxine Colonies, see Black Sea
Evangelists, Protestant sect in Poland, I 91
Evarts, William M., American Secretary of State, makes representations to Russian Government, II 293
Eve, daughter of Jacob Frank, head of Frankist sect, I 220
Excise Farmers, called *aktizniks*, II 186
Excommunication, see *Herem*
Execution, or forcible seizure, term explained, II 20
Exilarchs, heads of Babylonian Jewry, I 20
Exploitation, economic, Russian
 Jews accused of, II 193
 used as pretext for pogroms, II 261 f, 264, 270 ff, 315
 handicrafts stigmatized as, I 347
Expulsion, of Jews, by Polish Government from Lithuania (1495), I 65
 from Sandomir, I 173
 from Warsaw, I 260, 286 f
 by Russian troops, from invaded Polish cities (1654), I 153 f, 245
 by Russian Government, from Little Russia (1727), I 249 f, 253 ff
 from Russia in general (1741), I 255; (1744), I 257 f
 from Courland and Livonia (1829), II 32
 from Port Arthur and Kuantung Peninsula (1904), III 94
 from Russian Interior (outside of Pale), in general, I 402 f; II 264, 399, 428; III 95, 154, 157; foreign Jews expelled from, II 262, 293, 345
 from Kharkov, II 319
 from Moscow, II 264, 319, 396 f, 399 ff, 402, 408, 424 f; III 14 f
 from Oryol, II 264
 from Riga, II 256
 from St. Petersburg, II 319, 344, 399, 410
 from Pale of Settlement; Fifty-Verst Zone, I 408; II 62 ff, 385
 from Kiev, II 31, 33, 263 f, 319, 346; III 157
 from Nicholayev, II 32
 from Sevastopol, II 32
 from Yalta, II 428 f; III 18 f
 from villages, I 319, 323 f, 326, 343, 345 ff, 349, 351 f, 354 f, 405 ff; II 30 f, 32 f, 35, 48, 310 f, 318 f, 385; III 17, 157

- For particulars see special headings; see also Residence, Right of, and Temporary Rules
- Externs**, *extra muros* pupils, result of educational restrictions, II 351; III 31
school norm applied to, without sanction of Duma, III 159
join revolutionary ranks, III 31
- Factor**, Polish name for agent, I 170; II 55
- Fair**, commercial, Jews permitted to visit F's.
of Little Russia, for wholesale trade (1728), I 250; and for retail trade (1734), I 251
of government of Smolensk (1731), I 251
of government of Kharkov, for retail trade (1734), I 251
of Warsaw (1768), I 268
of Nizhni-Nevgorod, Kharlov, and other cities (1835), II 40
Jews travel to F's. abroad, particularly Leipsic, I 359
Polish F's. provide occasion for Jewish conferences, I 109 f
- F.** of Lublin, chief meeting-place of Council of Four Lands, I 109
- F.** of Lantzkrone, mystical services of Frankists during, I 213, 215
- F's.** of Brody and Zelva, rabbis assembled at, excommunicate Hasidim, I 237
- Farrar**, Canon, addresses Mansion House Meeting in London, II 290
- Feder**, Tobias, Hebrew writer, I 388
criticizes translation of Bible into Yiddish, I 388
- Feigin**, Litman, of Chernigov, submits memorandum on Jewish question to Council of State, II 38 f
- Feldshers**, Jewish, name explained, II 167
granted right of universal residence (1879), II 167
admission of, into army restricted, II 319
- Fergusson**, English Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, replies to interpellation concerning Russian Jews, II 382
- Fez** (Morocco), Alfasi native of, I 118
- Fichman**, modern Hebrew writer, III 162
- Fifty-Verst Zone**, see Border Zone
- Finkelstein**, Nahum, delegate of Jews wishing to engage in agriculture, I 363

- Finns**, oppressed by Russian Government, III 159
- Fishel, Moses**, chief-rabbi of Cracow, I 105
studied medicine in Padua, I 132
- Foreign Jews** forbidden to settle in Russia (1824), I 409
expelled from Russia, II 262, 293, 345
- Foster, John W.**, United States Minister to Russia, reports about pogroms, II 260
- Fox**, Polish tailor, starts anti-Jewish riot at Warsaw, I 286 f
- Fraind**, Yiddish daily in St. Petersburg, III 162
- France** (and French), Napoleon's policy towards Jews of, I 298
Jews killed by French for loyalty to Russia (1812), I 358
represented at Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle, I 398
high officials of, favor immigration of Russian Jews to Algiers, II 69
Polish-Jewish patriots, pursued by Russia, flee to, I 298; II 105, 109
French witness protest against pogroms, II 326
Russian Jews, in search of university education, go to, II 351
- Dreyfus Affair** in, III 32, 42; see Paris
- Franchise**, Jewish, discussed by Russian officials, III 121
proposed denial of, elicits protests from Jewish communities in Russia, III 121; and representatives of Russian people, III 122
finally granted, III 122
- Frank**, physician in White Russia, adherent of Mendelssohn, suggests Jewish reforms, I 331, 386
- Frank, Helena**, English translator of Peretz' works, III 62
- Frank, Jacob**, Polish-Jewish sectarian, born in Podolia, I 211
settles in Wallachia, I 212
travels as salesman in Turkey, I 212
joins, and later heads, Turkish Sabbatians, I 212
banished by Polish authorities to Turkey, I 213
regarded as reincarnation of Sabbatai Zevi, I 214
reappears in Podolia, I 216
submits to preliminary baptism in Lemberg, I 217
appears for final baptism in Warsaw, I 217 f
Polish king acts as godfather of, I 218

- poses as Messiah, I 218
 arrested in Warsaw, I 218
 imprisoned in Chenstokhov, I 219 f
 freed by invading Russian troops, I 219
 escapes to Brünn (Moravia), I 219
 moves to Vienna, I 220
 settles in Offenbach (Germany), I 220
 supported in Offenbach by adherents in Poland, I 283
 See Frankists
 Frank, Mendel, rabbi of Brest, receives large powers from Polish king, I 73, 104 f
 Frankfort-on-the-Main, Naphitali Cohen, Polish Cabalist and Sabbatian, settles in, I 204
 Offenbach, in neighborhood of, residence of Jacob Frank, I 220
 Oppenheim, Jewish painter, resident of, II 67
 place of publication, II 202
 Frankists, adherents of Jacob Frank, hold mystical services and engage in excesses, I 213 f
 excommunicated by rabbis, I 214
 address themselves to Demboviski, Catholic bishop, I 214
 denounce Talmud and recognize Trinity, I 214
 call themselves "Contra-Talmudists," and "Zoharists," I 214
 bishop arranges disputation between, and rabbis, 214 f
 acknowledged victorious in disputation and awarded fine, I 215
 obtain safe-conduct from Polish king, I 215
 offer to embrace Christianity, I 216
 hold second disputation with rabbis, I 216 f
 accuse Jews of ritual murder, I 216 f
 large number of, baptized at Lemberg, I 217
 remain loyal to Frank, I 218, 283
 follow Frank to Chenstokhov, his place of imprisonment, I 219
 settle with Frank in Offenbach, I 220
 Sabbatian movement compromised by, I 222
 shunned and despised by Poles, I 283
 ultimately absorbed by Poles, I 230
 Frederic, Harold, quoted, II 378
 Freeman, see Lieberman, A.
 Frederick of Austria, Jewish charter of, used as model by Polish rulers, I 45

- Frederick II., The Great**, annexes Polish territory, I 262
- Frederick Augustus**, Saxon king, made ruler of duchy of Warsaw, I 297
- receives report of Council of Ministers, opposing Jewish emancipation, I 299
- issues decree, postponing Jewish emancipation for ten years (1808), I 299
- receives anti-Jewish report from Polish Senate, I 302
- Frelinghuysen, Frederic T.**, American Secretary of State, expresses regret at treatment of Russian Jews, II 294
- Friedlaender, Israel**, quoted, II 235
- translator of Dubnow, III 52
- translator of Ahad Ha'am, III 60
- Friedländer, David**, submits memorandum to Polish Government, suggesting reform of Polish Jewry, II 90 f
- followers of, in Warsaw, plead for secular culture, I 386
- Friedman**, Jewish deputy to Third Duma, III 153
- complains about Jewish disabilities, III 157
- Friesel**, governor of Vilna, invites Polish nobility of Lithuania to express opinion on Jews, I 325 f
- submits opinion of nobility to Senate with his own memorandum, 326
- urges Jewish cultural reforms, 327
- Frischman, David**, Hebrew writer, III 60
- Frug, Simon**, Russian and Yiddish poet, III 63
- resides in St. Petersburg as "funkey," II 345
- glorifies emigration, II 330
- pictures despair of Russian Jewry, II 371
- appeals for victims of Kishinev massacres, III 78
- Fünn, Samuel Joseph**, Jewish historian and writer, II 136
- editor of *Pirhe Tzafon*, II 136; and *ha-Karmel*, II 217
- Gabbaim**, directors of Kahal institutions, I 107
- "gentlemen in waiting" of Tzaddiks, II 120
- Galatia (Asia Minor)**, Jewish communities in, I 14
- Galatovski**, Ukrainian writer, quoted, I 205
- Galicia**, divided into Eastern and Western, I 53
- annexed by Austria (1772), I 187, 262
- Sabbatian propaganda in, I 208, 210 f

- intellectual development of Jews in, contrasted with North-west, I 221
- Besht, founder of Hasidism, active in, I 223
- Hasidism spreads in, I 229, 274
- type of Tzaddik in, I 233
- rabbis of, excommunicate Hasidim, I 237
- Tzaddik of Sadagora (Bukovina) attracts Hasidim from, II 121
- I. B. Levinsohn associates with Maskilim of, II 125 f; contrasted with them, II 127
- Haskalah carried from, to Odessa, II 133
- Hebrew publications of, imitated in Vilna, II 136
- Meisels, rabbi of Cracow, joins Polish patriots in, II 179
- Baron Hirsch establishes schools in, II 416
- Hebrew writers in, III 163; see Russia (Red), Lemberg, and Yaroslav
- Galicia, Eastern, see Russia, Red
- Uniat Church in, I 141
- Galilee, Jewish colonies in, II 375
- Gamrat, Peter, bishop of Cracow, condemns woman to death for adhering to Jewish doctrine, I 79
- leads agitation against Jews, I 81 f
- Ganganelli, cardinal, later Pope Clement XIV., defends Polish Jews against ritual murder charges, I 179 f
- Gania, Cossack leader, perpetrates Jewish massacre in Niemirov, I 146
- Gans, David, work of, copied by Halperin, Polish-Jewish chronicler, I 201
- Gaons, heads of Babylonian Jewry, I 20
- Gaon of Bagdad corresponds with early Russian rabbis, I 33
- Gaon of Vilna, see Elijah of Vilna
- Gapon, Russian priest and demagogue, III 106
- Gatchina, near St. Petersburg, secret conferences of high Russian dignitaries held at, II 244 f
- Jewish deputation received by Alexander III. at, II 261
- Geiger, Abraham, quoted, I 136
- corresponds with Lilienthal, II 67
- Gemara, term explained, II 114; see Talmud
- Gendarmerie, see Police
- Genoa, commercial colony of, in Crimea, I 33 f
- Germany, Poland commercially dependent on, I 39; and religiously, I 40 f, 44

Polish rulers welcome settlers from, I 43 f; bestow upon them autonomy (Magdeburg Law), I 44

Jews of, carry on commerce with Slav countries, I 39

Jewish delegation from, pleads for admission of Jews to Poland, I 40

Jews of, immigrate to Poland, I 33, 41, 66

anti-Jewish hatred in Poland fed from, I 57; fostered by German burghers in Poland, I 95

Polish-Jewish pilgrims to Palestine pass through, I 209

Jacob Frank settles in, I 220

Jews of Slav lands culturally dependent on, I 33; invite rabbis from, I 43

Jews of, apply to Polish rabbis for religious advice, I 125

grandfather of Solomon Luria native of, I 124

Haskalah originates in, I 239, 384 ff

Polish Jews contrasted with Jews of, I 386

Hebrew publications of, imitated in Vilna, II 136

Russian-Jewish students in, II 381

Hebrew writers in, III 163

Doctor Herzl negotiates with emperor of, III 46

penalty of *Spießruten* introduced into Russia from, II 85

See Prussia and Berlin

Gershon Kutover, see Kutover

Gershuni, member of Social-revolutionary party, III 67

Ghederah, Jewish colony in Judea, II 375

Gher (Poland), see Goora Kalvaria

Ghetto, separate Jewish quarter in cities, creation of, demanded by Polish Church, I 48, 57

in Cracow, I 64, 85

in Moghilev (on the Dnieper), I 98 f

in Posen, I 85

in Vilna, I 99

in Warsaw, I 269

former Moscow Gh. called Glebov Yard, II 403

Gicatilla, Joseph, Cabalist, work of, published in Poland, I 134

Giers, De, Russian minister for Foreign Affairs, discusses Jewish question with American Government, II 293, 396

Ginzberg, Asher, see Ahad Ha'am

Ginzburg, Mordecai Aaron, Hebrew writer, II 133 f

translates German works into Hebrew, II 134

influences formation of neo-Hebraic style, II 134

- Giovio, Paolo, Italian scholar, I 242
- Gladkov, instigator of pogrom in Starodub, II 411 f
- Gladstone, English Prime Minister, cultivates friendly relations with Russia, II 287 f
 appealed to by Mansion House Meeting on behalf of Russian Jews, II 290
 answers interpellation concerning Russian Jews, II 291 f
- Glebov Yard, former Ghetto in Moscow, raided by police, II 403
- Glogau (Germany), Solomon Maimon buried in, I 240
- Gmina, Polish name for Congregation, II 102
- Gnesen (Province of Posen), oldest Polish diocese, I 47
 seat of Polish primate, I 82
 Council of Breslau demands introduction of canonical laws into diocese of, I 47 f
 archbishop of, attends Synod of Constance and presides over Synod of Kalish, I 57
 John Casimir, primate of, becomes Polish king, I 151
- God, conception of, by Besht, I 225 f
- Goeje, De, quoted, I 23
- Goethe, impressed by autobiography of Solomon Maimon, I 240
- Goetz, F., author of pamphlet defending Jews, II 389
- Gogol, Russian writer, anti-Jewish tendency of, 138 f
- "Going to the People," phase of Russian revolutionary movement, term explained, II 222
 practised by Russian-Jewish *intelligenzia*, II 222
- Golitzin, Count, Minister of Ecclesiastic Affairs, associate of Alexander I. in Christian mysticism, I 392, 396
 president of Russian Bible Society, I 396
 all Jewish matters transferred to, I 394
 communicates with Kahals through "Deputies of Jewish People," I 394
 receives protest of deputies against blood accusation, II 74
 prohibits blood accusation by decree, II 74 f
 extends prohibition of blood accusation to Poland, II 99
 advises dissolution of Society of Israelitish Christians, I 400
 orders investigation of "Judaizing heresy," I 401
 accuses Jews of proselytizing, I 404
 suggests prohibition of keeping Christian domestics, I 404
 discharged, I 395

- Gonta**, Cossack leader, engineers Jewish massacre, I 184 ff
- Goora Kalvaria** (*Polish*, Gora Kalwarza; *Yiddish*, Gher), hasidic dynasty of, popular in Warsaw, II 122
- Gorchakov**, viceroy of Poland, receives deputation of revolutionary Poles, II 180
opposes Jewish rights at Berlin Congress, II 202
- Gordin, Jacob**, founds anti-talmudic sect, II 333 f
becomes Jewish playwright in America, II 325
- Gordon, Judah Leib**, Hebrew poet, champion of Haskalah, II 228
secretary of Society of Diffusion of Enlightenment, II 229
attacks traditional Judaism, II 129 ff
champions emigration from Russia, II 328
dies (1892), III 63
- Goremykin**, Minister of Interior, pursues reactionary policy, III 9, 16, 135
- Gorgippia** (Crimea), now called Anapa, ancient Jewish settlement in, I 14
- Gorodnya** (near Chernigov), alleged ritual murder at, reported to Peter the Great, I 247 f
- Gotovtzev**, Assistant-Minister of Interior, chairman of Central Committee for Revision of Jewish Question, II 227
- Gotz**, member of Social Revolutionary party, III 67
- Government** (province), governor, and governor-general, terms explained, I 308
- Grace, William R.**, mayor of New York, presides at protest meeting, II 296
- Granville, Lord**, English Secretary for Foreign Affairs, receives Anglo-Jewish deputation on subject of pogroms, II 202 f
receives resolutions of Mansion House Meeting, II 290
- Grazdanin** ("The Citizen"), anti-Semitic Russian paper, II 380, 381, 412
- Great Poland**, see Poland, Great
- Greeks**, immigration of ancient Greeks into Tauris and Crimea, I 13 f
export grain from Tauris and Crimea, I 14
Jews follow in wake of, I 14
language of, spoken by Jews of Tauris, I 16
compete with Jews in Odessa, II 191
make pogrom upon Jews of Odessa, II 192 f

- Greek-Orthodox Church**, oppressed in Poland, I 91 f; and Ukraine, I 140 ff
- "Gregor, Horowitz & Kohan,"** semi-Jewish firm of Russian army purveyors, II 202, 244
- Greig**, Russian Admiral, member of Council of State, pleads for Jews, II 37
- Gresser**, city-governor of St. Petersburg, persecutes Jews, II 343 f
issues ordinance concerning Jewish names, II 397 f
deports Moscow fugitives, II 410
- Grigoryev**, member of Committee for Amelioration of Jews, pleads for maintenance of Pale, I 196
- Grigoreyev**, city-governor of Odessa, dismissed for restraining "Black Hundred," III 151
- Grodno (city)**, meeting-place of Polish Diet, I 76
important Jewish community in, I 59, 73
Jews of, expelled, I 65; and allowed to return, I 70 f
Jews of, assure Sigismund I. of loyalty to country, I 81
Poles of, antagonistic to Russia (1812), I 357
Jews of, entrusted with police duty, I 357
- blood accusation in, II 73, 80
Jewish community of, represented on Polish Council, (*Waad Arba Aratzoth*), I 110; and later on Lithuanian Council, I 112
Mordecai Jaffe rabbi of, I 127
Sundel Sonnenberg, army purveyor and Jewish deputy, native of, I 358
- Grodno** (province, or government), annexed by Russia (1795), I 297
included in Pale (1795), I 317; (1835), II 39
invited by Russian Government to send deputies, I 349
Jews expelled from villages of (1827), II 30 f
placed under military dictatorship of Muravyov, II 188
Cities in:
Druskeniki, II 377
Ruzhany, I 162
Zelva, I 237
- Grudinski**, convert, accuses Jews of ritual murder, II 80
- Gruzenberg**, Russian-Jewish lawyer, acts as counsel for Blondes, accused of ritual murder, III 37
defends Dashevski, assailant of Krushevan, III 82
defends Jews of Kishinev, III 91

- Gruzin** (Crimea), I 26
- Gudovich**, Count, governor-general of South-west, rebuked for interfering with Jewish deputation to Paul I., I 325
- Guido**, papal legate, convenes Church Council of Breslau, I 47
- Guilds**, mercantile, in Poland, I 44; see Merchants trade Guilds, in Poland, I 44; see Trade-Unions
- Guizolfi**, Zechariah, Italian Jew, owns Taman Peninsula, I 36 corresponds with Ivan III. of Moscow, I 36
- Guizot**, French Premier, supports schemes of Russian-Jewish emigration to Algiers, II 69
- Gumbiner**, Abel, head of yeshibah in Kalish, Hebrew author, I 200
- Gumplovich**, Polish-Jewish writer and assimilator, II 213
- Günzberg**, Baron Joseph Yozel, leader of St. Petersburg community, petitions Alexander II. on behalf of victim of ritual murder accusation, II 152
- petitions Alexander II. for privileges to Jews, II 159 f
- founder of Society for Diffusion of Enlightenment, II 214
- Günzburg**, Baron Horace, son of former, waits on Vladimir, brother of Alexander III., II 260
- member of Jewish deputation to Alexander III., 261
- calls conference of notables in St. Petersburg, II 277, 304
- acts as link between Jews and Pahlen Commission, I 337
- petitions Government to allow Jews purchase of land for personal use, III 24
- Gurko**, governor-general of Odessa, suggests restrictive school-norm for Jews, II 339
- Gurnitzki**, Lucas, Polish writer, quoted, I 79 f
- Gymnazium**, secondary school, name explained, II 164
- right of residence outside Pale proposed for graduates of, II 164
- restrictive percentage at, intensified, III 29, 158; but not applied to girls, III 30
- award of graduation certificates restricted in case of Jews, III 159
- Pro-gymnazium, name explained, III 29
- See Education and School
- Gzheslik**, Jewish tailor, accused of desecrating host, I 101

- Ha-Asif*, Hebrew Periodical, II 372, III 58
- Habad**, adherents of "rational Hasidism," term explained, I 234
- centered in White Russia, I 234, II 117
- Polish Tzaddiks compared with those of, II 123
- See Shneerson, Zalman
- Haber**, title of Jewish educated layman, I 117
- Ha-Emet*, socialistic periodical in Hebrew, II 223
- Hague Conference**, the, calling of, prompts Nicholas II. to stop pogroms, III 35 f
- Haidamacks**, rebellious Ukrainian peasants, name explained, I 182, II 138
- massacre Jews (1648), I 49; (1734 and 1750), I 182; (1768), I 182 ff
- massacres of, described by Gogol, II 138 f
- Haimovich, Avigdor**, rabbi of Pinsk, informs against Hasidim, I 377 f
- Haint*, Yiddish daily in Warsaw, III 162
- Ha-Karmel*, Hebrew weekly, in Vilna, II 217
- Ha-Kol*, Hebrew periodical in Königsberg, II 223
- Halevi, David**, called *Taz*, rabbi of Lemberg and Ostrog, I 130
- author of commentary on *Shulhan Arukh*, I 130
- receives letter and present from Sabbatai Zevi, I 206 f
- Halevi, Isaiah**, son of former member of Polish-Jewish delegation to Sabbatai Zevi, I 206
- Halperin**, banker of Berdychiv, member of rabbinical commission, II 57
- Halperin, Jehiel**, rabbi of Minsk, Hebrew chronicler, I 200 f
- Ha-Maggid*, Hebrew weekly, II 217
- Hamburg**, Solomon Maimon resides in, I 239
- Moscow refugees in, II 420
- Ha-Melitz*, Hebrew weekly, in St. Petersburg, edited by Zederbaum, II 204, 217 f
- publishes Lillienblum's articles, II 236
- champions "Love of Zion" movement, II 332
- becomes daily, II 372, III 58
- Handicrafts**; see Artisans
- Hannover, Nathan**, of Zaslav, historian, describes Council of Four Lands, I 111
- pictures Jewish intellectual life in Poland, I 116 ff
- gives account of Khmelnitzki massacres, I 157
- Hanukkah**, king of Khazars, I 26

- Hardenberg**, Prussian representatives at Congress at Aix-la-Chapelle, I 399
- Harkavy**, quoted, I 23
- Harrison**, President of United States, publishes diplomatic papers bearing on Russian Jews, II 294, 394
describes, in message to Congress, plight of Russian Jewry, II 408 f
- Hasdai Ibn Shaprut**, of Cordova. corresponds with king of Khazars, I 24 ff
- Ha-Shahar**, Hebrew monthly, edited by Smolenskin, II 218, 234
publishes Gordon's epics, II 229
champions "Love of Zion" movement, II 332
- Ha-Shiloah**, Hebrew monthly, edited by Ahad Ha'am. and later by Klausner, III 58, 162 f
- Hasidim**, adherents of Judah Hasid, I 209
emigrate to Palestine, I 209 ff
adherents of Hasidism; see Hasidism
struggle between H. and old-orthodox (*Mithnagdim*), I 238, 274, 278, 375 f
H. of Vilna rejoice over death of Gaon, I 375
granted right of secession by Statute of 1804, I 356, 379
- H. of Old-Constantinople "protest" against Nicholas I., II 22
- H. of Poland refuse to discard Jewish dress, II 145
- Hasidism**, founded by Besht, I 222
doctrine of, expounded by Besht, I 22, 224 ff
counteracts Rabbinitism, I 224 f; and Messianism, I 222; and Asceticism, I 227
propagated by Besht's apostles, I 229 ff
opposes Haskalah, I 238 f
bitterly opposed by Elijah of Vilna, I 236 ff, 372 ff
spread of, I 231 f
triumph of, I 371 f
growth of, under Alexander I., I 381 ff
stagnation of, under Nicholas I., II 116 ff
in North (White Russia and Lithuania), I 381 f, II 117 f
in South (Ukraine), I 382 f, II 119 ff
in Poland, I 384, II 122 f
retrogressive character of, I 278, II 124
encourages use of alcohol, II 124 f
restrictions against, suggested by Friesel, governor of Vilna, I 327

- denounced by rabbi of Pinsk, as dangerous to Russian Government, I 378
- extermination of, recommended by Kalmansohn, I 385
- criticized by David Friedländer, II 90
- attacked, or silently opposed, by I. B. Levinsohn, II 127 f
- subjected to rigorous censorship (1864), II 212
- literature of, declared by I. B. Levinsohn as dangerous to State, II 130
- See Hasidim, Tzaddiks, and Shneur Zalman
- Haskalah**, attempt to harmonize Jewish and secular culture, term explained, II 125
- originated by Mendelssohn in Germany, I 238 f, II 125
- opposed by Rabbinism and Hasidism, I 238 f
- hated by Nahman of Bratzlav, I 383
- Solomon Maimon influenced by, I 239
- effect of, on Jews of Warsaw, I 284, 384 ff
- championed by Jacques Kalmansohn, I 385
- need of, for Polish Jews, emphasized by David Friedländer, II 90; and followers, I 386
- advocated by Frank in White Russia, I 331, 386
- carried to St. Petersburg, I 386 ff
- Max Lilienthal appeals to adherents of (Maskilim), II 53
- preached by Isaac Baer Levinsohn, II 125 ff
- center of, in Odessa, II 132 f
- center of, in Vilna, II 134, 136 f
- aims of adherents of, in Vilna, II 136 f.
- persecuted adherents of, escape through baptism, II 132
- adherents of, lean on Russian Government, II 137
- Russian H. compared with German, II 137 f
- becomes more aggressive, II 210, 224
- stimulates neo-Hebraic style and literature, II 132 ff, 210
- advocated by Jewish press, II 217, 332 f
- championed by M. L. Lilienblum, II 236
- adherents of, portrayed by Mapu, II 223
- See Education, Neo-Hebraic Literature, and School
- Ha-Tzeṣfirah**, Hebrew weekly in Warsaw, advocates Haskalah, II 333
- edited by Sokolow, III 60
- becomes a daily, II 372, III 58, 162
- Hausfreund**, Yiddish periodical, III 59

- Hayyun**, emissary of Sabbatai Zevi, I 204
- Hazakah**, priority of possession, term explained, II 188
grant of, must be sanctioned by Kahal, I 190, II 188
matters relating to, decided by Council of Four Lands, I 111
- Ha-Zeman**, Hebrew daily in Vilna, III 162
- Hebrew**, language, importance of, emphasized by Smolenskin, II 134 f
position of, in Jewish life, forms party issue, III 161
promoted by Zionism, III 45
restoration of, II 133, 135, 225
modern H. (Neo-Hebraic) literature, beginnings of, I 388 f
rise of, II 132 ff
renaissance of, II 224 ff, III 58 ff, 162 f
cultivated by Haskalah, II 132 ff, 210, 224
H. writers hail from Lithuania, II 238
H. press, beginnings of, II 217 f
preaches Haskalah, II 217
recent revival of, III 58 f
See also Language
- Heder**, traditional Jewish school, imparts elementary education, I 114
Bible and Talmud principal subjects of instruction at, I 114, 121
- secular subjects excluded from, I 277
left to private initiative, but supervised by Kahal, I 114
pupils of, examined weekly by head of yeshibah, I 118
attendance at, compulsory for boys, I 114, 121
negative effects of, I 277
shortened attendance at, suggested by Dyerzhavin, I 333
criticised by Russian Council of State, II 49
abolition of, suggested by Lilienthal, II 53
defended by Rabbinical Commission, II 57
placed under Government supervision (1842), II 56; (1856), II 176
keepers of (Melammeds) required to possess secular education (1844), II 58
recognized by ukase of 1879, II 177
6,000 H's. in Russian Southwest, II 194
legalized and restricted to religious subjects (1893), II 427 f
See Education, School, and Yeshibah
- Heder**, for poor children, called Talmud Torah, maintained by public funds, I 114 f

- pupils of, examined weekly by trustee, I 118
 provided for, by Council of Four Lands, I 195
 established in Moscow, III 13
- Helena**, Russian princess, sympathizes with "Judaizing heresy," I 36
- Helfman, Hesia**, participates in plot against Alexander II., II 244
- Heliconias**, name of Greek-speaking Jew, I 115
- Heller, Lipman**, rabbi of Cracow, describes persecutions of 1648, I 58
- Helsingfors** (Finland), Russian Zionists hold Convention at, III 144 f
 "H. Program" gradually weakened, III 146
- Heniochi**, tribe, I 15
- Hennadius**, archbishop of Novgorod, combats "Judaizing heresy," I 37
- Henry of Valois**, elected king of Poland, I 89
- Heracles**, name of slave freed by Crimean Jewess, I 15
- Herem** (Excommunication), right of, granted by Polish kings to rabbi of Brest (1531), I 73, 105; to rabbis of Great Poland (1551), I 106; to Kahals of Lithuania (1672), I 190
- proclaimed against Sabbatians by rabbis assembled at Lemberg (1722), I 211; (1725), I 211
- issued against Frankists by rabbis assembled at Brody, I 214
- issued against Hasidim by rabbinical court of Vilna (1722), I 237; by rabbis assembled at Brody, I 237; and at Zelva (Grodno), I 237; reaffirmed by Elijah of Vilna (1796), I 373 f
- new II. against Hasiḏim contemplated by Kahal of Vilna (1797), I 375
- issued by Kahal of Vilna against Simeon Volfovich (1788), I 276
- Jews of Minsk complain about abuse of (1782), I 275
- prohibited by Statute of 1804, I 344
- prohibition of, occasionally disregarded, I 367
- power of, criticised by Polish assimilationists, II 101
- secret exercise of, alleged by Brafman, II 188
- Hernish, Stanislav**, Polish-Jewish patriot, II 105
- refutes Polish attacks upon Jews, II 109
- Hershel, Ostropoler**, See Ostropoler

- Hershko**, name of Jewish "arendar," I 266
- Hertzen**, Alexander, liberal Russian writer, describes sufferings of cantonists, II 24 f
influences Russian-Jewish *intelligenza*, II 207
- Herzl**, Theodor, aroused by Dreyfus Affair, III 42 f
publishes *Judenstaat*, III 43
compared with Pinsker, III 43
revives hopes of *Hobebe Zion*, III 43 f
speeches of, discussed in Russia, III 47
author of *Altneuland*, III 48
visit of, to Russia, III 82 ff
negotiates with Plehve, III 83 f; and Lansdorf, III 84
greeted enthusiastically by Russian Zionist, III 84
criticized by non-Zionists, III 84
lays Uganda project before Sixth Zionist Congress, III 84
death of, mourned by Seventh Zionist Congress, III 144
- Hetman**, name explained, I 143, 192, 250
head of Cossacks, I 143
Khmelnitzki elected to post of, I 144
- H. of Lithuania sends instructions to Kahal of Brest, I 192
- H. of Little Russia pleads for admission of Jews, I 250, 260
- Hezekiah**, king of Khazars, I 26
- Hirsch**, Baron Maurice, II 413
proposes to establish arts and crafts schools in Russia, II 415
proposal of, declined by Russian Government, II 415
representatives of, offer Pobye-donostzev large contribution, II 415
applies funds intended for Russia to schools in Galicia, II 416
sends expedition to Argentina, II 416
sends Arnold White to Russia, II 416 ff
founds Jewish Colonization Association, II 414, 419
obtains permission of Russian Government to regulate emigration, II 420
issues appeal, warning against emigration, II 420
scheme of, results in failure, II 421, III 10
- Hirsh Kaidanover**, see Kaidanover
- Hirshovich**, Abraham, Polish court broker, submits project of Jewish reforms to King Stanislav Augustus, I 284
- Historiography**, Jewish, in Russia, III 65

Hobebe Zion, see Zionism

Hollaenderski, Polish-Jewish patriot and writer, lives as exile in Paris, II 109

Holland, Peter the Great in, I 246
Antonio Sanchez, Russian court physician, invited from, I 258

See Amsterdam

Horodno, Nehman of, disciple of Besht, I 227

Homel (government of Moghilev), massacre under Khmelnitzki at (1648), I 149

pogrom at (1903), III 87 ff
self-defence organized by Jews of, III 87 f

pogrom at, condoned by governor of Moghilev, III 89

misrepresented in official documents, III 89

described as act of revenge by Jews, III 101

tried by Russian court, III 101 ff

Jewish community of, signs petition for equal rights, III 108

Horowitz, Isaiah, Cabalist, author of *Sheloh*, I 135

Horowitz, Sheftel, son of former, rabbi of Posen and Hebrew author, I 135

author of liturgy describing catastrophe of 1648, I 158

Horvitz, Russian-Jewish writer, attacked by Russian periodical, II 207 f

defended in public protest of Russian writers, II 208

Host Desecration, Charge of, causes death of Jews in Posen (1399), I 55, 95 174; and Sokhachev (1556), I 86 f

forbidden by Sigismund II. (1566), I 88; and Stephen Batory (1576), I 89

used as pretext to expel Jews of Cracow (1635), I 101

of frequent occurrence at end of 17th century, I 172

Hoym, Prussian minister, carries out Jewish reforms in annexed Polish provinces, I 385

Hugo, Victor, protests against Jewish persecutions in Russia, II 326

Hungary, geographical position of, I 25, 150

adopts Magdeburg Law, I 44

Church Council (of Buda) in, I 49

Louis of, king of Poland, persecutes Jews, I 54

Husiatyn (Galicia), place of publication, I 123

Huss, influence of, penetrates into Poland, I 57

adherents of, persecuted, I 62

Ibn Fakih, Arabic geographer, quoted, I 23

- Ibn Khordadbeh**, Arabic geographer, quoted, I 23
- Ibn Shaprut**, see Hasdai I
- Ibn Sharzi**, Arabic writer, quoted, I 23
- Ignatyev, Nicholas Pavlovich**, Russian statesman, militant pan-Slavist, II 259
- ambassador at Constantinople, II 259
- nicknamed "Father of Lies," II 259
- member of reactionary "Sacred League," II 248
- appointed Minister of Interior, II 259
- ascribes pogroms to revolutionary propaganda, II 259 f
- changes attitude, II 261
- refuses to submit memorandum in defence of Jews to Tzar, II 262
- shows indifference to pogrom victims, II 263
- ascribes pogroms to economic exploitation of Jews, II 271 f
- issues circular condemning economic activities of Jews, II 273
- influences Central Committee for Revision of Jewish Question, II 277
- receives deputation of Jewish Notables, II 277
- calls upon Jews to leave Russia, II 285, 297
- Ignatyev** directed to appoint Gubernatorial Commissions, II 272, 363
- circular of, read to Gubernatorial Commissions, II 274; quoted by Cardinal Manning at London protest meeting, II 289
- disregards protests in England, II 292
- permits holding of Jewish Conference in St. Petersburg, II 304
- holds Jews responsible for pogroms, II 305
- considers settlement of Jews on steppes of Central Asia, II 306
- suggests "Temporary Rules," II 311
- makes concessions to Committee of Ministers, II 311, 318
- connivance at pogroms causes downfall of, II 314
- downfall of, checks plan of Jewish emigration from Russia, II 414
- Illarion, Metropolitan** of, preaches hatred against Jews, I 31
- Illustratzia**, Russian magazine, attacks Jews, II 207 f
- causes public protest of Russian literateurs, II 208

- Ilovaiski, professor, of Moscow, opposed to Jews, II 387
- Ilya (government of Vilna), home of Menashe Ilyer, II 114
- Ilyer, Menashe (Manasseh), Talmudist with modern tendencies, II 114 ff
 acquires modern culture, II 114
 criticises spiritual leaders, II 115
 book of, burned, II 115
 pleads for modifications of religious law, II 115
 unappreciated by contemporaries, II 116
- Imperial Messenger (*Pravityelstvenny Vvestnik*), official organ of Russian Government, minimizes pogroms, II 255
 warns against pogrom protests, II 291
 foreshadows new pogroms, II 299
 criticised by *Moscow News*, II 299
- Informing and Informers, see Mesirah
- Inkerman, Heights of, near Sevastopol, Jewish soldiers killed at, II 149
- Inns (and Taverns), keeping of, forms important Jewish pursuit, I 265, 362
- Jews in White Russia forbidden from, I 311
- permitted by Senate, I 312
- forbidden by Statute of 1804, I 342 f
- See Arendar, Propinatzia, and Villages
- Innocent IV., pope, bull of, condemning ritual murder libel (1247), referred to, I 179
- Intelligenza, Jewish, in Russia, assimilation of, II 206 ff
 in league with Russian Government, II 211 f
 indifferent to things Jewish, II 212
- Society for Diffusion of Enlightenment acts on behalf of, II 215
- disillusionment of, II 324 ff
- Interior, Russian, the (Russian empire outside Pale of Settlement), barred to Jews of annexed White Russia (1790, 1791), I 316
- Jewish manufacturers, merchants, and artisans permitted to sojourn temporarily in (1804), I 344
- Governments of Astrakhan and Caucasia in, opened to Jewish agriculturists (1804), I 342 f
- Council of State considers admission of Jewish merchants into, II 35 f; negatived by Nicholas I, II 36

- Jews admitted into, on temporary "furlough" (1835), II 40
- Jews, illegally residing in, severely punished (1838), II 42
- prominent Jews of St. Petersburg plead for opening of (1856), II 160
- admission of Jews into, discussed by Council of State and "Jewish Committee," II 161 ff
- Jewish guild merchants admitted into (1859), II 162
- Jews with learned degrees admitted into (1861), II 166
- Jews with higher education admitted into (1879), II 167
- Jewish artisans (mechanics and distillers) admitted into (1865), II 170
- Jews begin to settle in, II 171
- Alexander II. refuses to admit "Nicholas soldiers" into, II 171; but yields (1867), II 172
- discharged Jewish soldiers barred from (1874), II 354 f
- "Jewish Committee" discusses admission of Jews into (1880), II 196 ff
- five "Gubernatorial Commissions" advocate opening of, II 275
- "illegal" Jews in, persecuted, II 342 ff, 385
- old settlers from among "illegal" Jews permitted to remain in (1880), II 404
- admission of Jews to schools in, restricted to 5% (1887), II 350; restriction placed on Statute books (1908), III 158
- admission of Jews to universities in, restricted to 3% (1898), III 29
- pogrom in (Nizhni-Novgorod), II 360
- Government endeavors to annual admission of privileged Jews into, II 399
- expulsion of Jews from, II 428
- barred to Jews (under Nicholas II.), III 20 f
- Jewish soldiers forbidden to spend furlough in (1896), III 21
- Jews in, forbidden to acquire real estate in villages (1903), III 81
- attempt to expel families of mobilized Jewish soldiers from, III 95
- Jewish veterans of Russian-Japanese War and families of other privileged Jews admitted into (1904), III 98 f
- pogroms in (October, 1905), III 130

- expulsion of Jews from (under Nicholas II.), III 157
- See Pale of Settlement, and Residence, Right of
- Ionian Islands, emigration from, to Black Sea settlements, I 13 f
- Iphicleides, name of Greek-speaking Jew, I 15
- Isaac, king of Khazars, I 26
- Isaac, of Chernigov, corresponds with Gaon in Bagdad, I 33
- Isaac, Jewish physician at Polish court, I 132
- Isaac ben Jacob, see Alfasi
- Isaacs, Henry, Lord Mayor of London, disapproves of protest meeting against pogroms, II 382
- Ishmaelites, see Muhammedans
- Ispravnik, title of Russian official, II 301, 409
- Israel, son of Shakhna, succeeds his father as rabbi of Lublin, I 123
- Israel, of Ruzhany, executed on ritual murder charge, I 162 f
- Israel, Baal-Shem-Tob, called Besht, founder of Hasidism, I 222 ff
- born in Podolia, I 222
- sent to heder, I 222
- neglects studies, I 222
- strange conduct of, I 222
- studies Practical Cabala, I 222 f
- settles in Brody, I 223
- marries sister of rabbi, I 223
- retires to solitude in Carpathian mountains, I 223
- occupies humble position in Tlusta (Galicia), I 223
- considered an ignoramus, I 223
- begins to practise as *Baal-Shem*, I 223
- reputed as miracle-worker, I 224
- called "good *Baal-Shem*," or *Baal-Shem-Tob*, I 224
- disparages exclusive Talmud study, I 224, 226
- recognizes authority of Cabala, I 224
- objects to Cabalistic asceticism, I 224, 226
- inculcates cheerfulness, I 225
- emphasizes faith and prayer, I 225, 226 f
- settles in Medzhibozh (Podolia), I 225
- doctrine of, I 225 f
- evolves belief in *Tzaddik*, I 227
- disciples of, I 227 f
- acknowledged by rabbi of Brody, I 228
- sends epistle to Palestine, I 228
- believed to associate with biblical prophets, I 228
- popular discourses of, I 228
- laments conversion of Frankists, I 229
- takes part in Frankist disputation, I 229

- sayings of, collected by disciple, I 230, 237
 See also Hasidism and Hasidim
- Israel, of Kozhenitz, leader of Hasidim in duchy of Warsaw, I 384
 successors of, II 122
- Israel, of Ruzhin (government of Kiev), hasidic leader, keeps magnificent court, II 120
 arouses suspicions of governor-general, I 120 f
 arrested, I 121
 flees to Sadagora (Bukovina), I 121
 dynasty of, branches out, I 221
 contests supremacy of Joshua Heshel Apter, II 121
- Isserles, Moses (*Remo*), son of Kahal elder in Cracow, I 123
 pupil of Shakhna of Lublin, I 123
 judge and head of yeshibah in Cracow, I 123
 writes commentary on *Turim*, I 123
 adds notes to *Shulhan Arukh*, I 124
 makes *Shulhan Arukh* great factor in Polish Jewry, I 130
 differs from Solomon Luria, I 126
 disparages mysticism, I 126
 favors moderate philosophy, I 126
- studies Maimonides' *Moreh*, I 126, 132
 teacher of Mordecai Jaffe, I 127
 method of, contrasted with that of Jaffe, I 128
 method of, looked down upon by Meir of Lublin, I 129
 unequalled by successors, I 199
- Istumin, Pobyedonostzev's agent in Moscow, II 401
- Italy, influence of, extends to Crimea, I 34
 Guizolfi, Jew from Italy, owns Tanan Peninsula, I 36
 Master Leon, Jew from, physician at Moscow court, I 37
 Jews of, apply to Polish rabbis for religious advice, I 125
 Jewish physicians in Poland originate from, I 132, or receive medical training in, I 132
- Delacruta, founder of Polish Cabala, born in, I 134
 work of Recanati, Italian Cabalist, studied in Poland, I 134
 Calahora, native of, executed in Cracow, I 164 f
 Judah Hasid studies Practical Cabala in, I 208
 Polish-Jewish pilgrims to Palestine pass through, I 209
- Itche (Isaac) Meier Alter, head of Gher Hasidim, has many adherents in Warsaw, II 122

Ityl, ancient name for Volga,
I 19, 26

name of Khazar capital, I 19

Itzele, Rabbi, see Zelikin

Itzhaki, Itzhok (Isaac), head of
Volozhin yeshibah, member
of Rabbinical Commission,
II 57

Ivan III., grand duke of Moscow,
I 29

assisted by Crimean Jews in
negotiations with Khan, I 35

corresponds with Guizolfi, Ital-
ian Jew, I 36

orders burning of "Judaizers,"
I 37

executes his Jewish body-phys-
ician, I 37

Ivan IV., The Terrible, Tzar of
Moscow, I 29

refuses to admit Lithuanian
Jews into Russia, I 243

orders drowning of Jews of
Polotzk, I 243

Izyaslav, former name for gov-
ernment of Volhynia, I 317

Jacob Itzhok (Isaac), of Lublin,
pioneer of Hasidism in Po-
land, I 384

Jacob (Nahman), of Belzhytz,
Polish court physician, I 136
author of polemical treatise
against Christianity, I 136 f

Jacob Zelig (Selek, or Jelek),
presents petition of Polish
Jews to pope, I 179 f

Jacob Ben Asher, author of
Turim, work of, studied in
Poland, I 118

Jacobs, Joseph, quoted, II 287

Jacobsohn, deputy to First
Duma, reports on Bialystok
pogrom, III 139

Jaffa (Palestine), Jewish agri-
cultural settlements in
neighborhood of, II 322

representative of Odessa Pales-
tine Society in, II 422

gymnazium in, III 148

Jaffe, Mordecai, native of Bo-
hemia, I 126

pupil of Isserles, I 126

rabbi of various Polish com-
munities, I 126

presides over Council of Four
Lands, I 126

author of elaborate code, en-
titled *Lebushim*, I 126 f

method of, differs from that of
Caro and Isserles, I 27; look-
ed down upon by Meir of
Lublin, 129

comments on Maimonides'
Moreh, I 132

pupil of Delacruta, Cabalist,
I 134

author of cabalistic com-
mentary, I 134

unequalled by successors, I 199

Japanese, expel Russians from
Kuantung (Shantung) Pe-
ninsula, III 94

- destroy Russian fleet, III 110
 Jews accused of alliance with,
 III 95 f
- Jastrow, Marcus**, preacher in
 Warsaw, active in Polish In-
 surrection, II 179 ff
 rabbi in Philadelphia, II 179
- Jehiel Michael**, rabbi and head of
 yeshibah in Niemirow, killed
 in massacre (1648), I 146
- Jelek**, see Jacob Zelig
- Jeremiah**, the prophet, teachings
 of, attacked by Judah Leib
 Gordon, II 230
- Jerome, The Holy**, quoted, I 17
- Jerusalem**, referred to by Khazar
 king, I 27; and Khazar
 Jews, I 30
 Polish-Jewish pilgrims arrive
 in, I 205
 Gymnazium in, III 148
- Jesuits**, patronized by Stephen
 Batory, I 90
 establish academy at Vilna,
 I 90 f
 grow in influence, I 91
 derive financial benefit from
 ritual murder libel, I 96
 hostile to Jews, I 97, 99 f
 effect of, on Polish people, I 171
 invited in Posen to exorcise
 evil spirits, I 203
 students of colleges of, assault
 Jews, I 95, 161; but in Vilna
 protect Jews, I 166
- college of, in Vitebsk supplies
 anti-Jewish information, I
 330
- Jewish Chronicle**, of London,
 quoted, II 262, 290, 292, 382
- Jewish Colonial Trust**, created
 by Zionists, III 45
 financial weakness of, III 46
 sale of shares of, forbidden in
 Russia, III 83
- Jewish Colonization Association**
 (ICA), founded by Baron
 Hirsch in London, II 414,
 419
 Central Committee of, estab-
 lished in St. Petersburg, II
 420
 transplants Jews to Argentina,
 II 421
 refused permission to settle
 Jews as farmers in Russia,
 III 10
- Jewish Historico-Ethnographic**
Society, in St. Petersburg,
 founded 1908, III 160
 publishes periodical, III 160
- Jewish Judge**, attached to court
 of voyevoda, I 46
 nominated by Jewish elders, I
 191
 appointed by voyevoda, I 46,
 191
 functions of, I 46, 191
 tries cases between Jews, I 46,
 52

- sits in Kahal chamber, near synagogue, I 46, 52, 191
- officials in presence of Kahal elders, I 191
- guided, in part, by Jewish law, I 191
- Jewish Literary Society**, in St. Petersburg, founded in 1908, III 160
- dissolved (1911), III 161
- Jewish National Fund**, created by Zionists, III 45
- collections for, forbidden in Russia, III 83
- Jewish National Party** (Volkspartei), in Russia based on principle of National-Cultural Autonomism, III 147
- recognizes Jewish centers in America and Palestine, III 147 f
- Jewish People's Group**, in Russia, opposes Zionism, III 146
- satisfied with minimum of Jewish national rights, III 147
- Jewish Publication Society of America**, referred to, III 51, 60, 62
- Joel Baal-Shem** (miracle worker), of Zamoshch, I 203
- John**, Russian ecclesiastic, preaches hatred against Jews, I 31
- John Albrecht**, king of Poland (1492-1501), establishes ghetto in Cracow, I 64
- permits expelled Lithuanian Jews to settle in Poland, I 65
- grants right of distilling (*propinatzya*) to nobles (1496), I 67
- attended by Jewish body-physician, 132
- John Casimir** (1648-1668), concludes peace with Khmelnit-zki, I 151
- permits baptized Jews to return to Judaism, I 151
- anxious to compensate Jews for past sufferings, I 158
- grants right of free commerce to Jews of Cracow, I 159
- grants privileges to other communities, I 159
- John Sobieski** (1674-1696), protects Jews against enemies, I 165 f
- protects Jews of Vilna, I 166
- Jorjan**, Sea of, see Caspian Sea
- Joseph**, king of Khazars, replies to letter of Hasdai Ibn Shaprut, I 25 ff
- Joseph II.**, emperor of Austria, engages in "reformatory" experiments, I 262
- project of Jewish reforms in Poland influenced by policy of, I 271, 273
- Toleration Act of (1782), II 30
- Joseph Israel**, see Benjamin III

- Joseph Kalish**, Polish minter, I 42
- Joseph. N. S.**, secretary of Russo-Jewish Committee in London, II 388
- Josephus**, historian, quoted, I 14 f
- Joshua Heshel Apter**, see Apter
- Jost**, refutes anti-Semitic book of Abbé Chiarini, II 104, quoted, I 390
- Journal De St. Petersburg**, Russian official organ, refutes charge of pogroms, II 287 f
- Jud. Der**, Yiddish weekly in Warsaw, III 59
- Judæophobia**, name for Russian anti-Semitism, II 247
growth of, II 378 ff
contrasted with German anti-Semitism, II 6
- Judah Ha-Nasi**, compiler of the Mishnah, II 114
- Judah Hasid**, founder sect in Poland, I 208 f
heads pilgrims to Palestine. I 209
dies in Jerusalem, I 210
- Judah Leib**, father of Jacob Frank. I 211
settles with son in Wallachia, I 212
- "**Judaizing Heresy**," originated in Novgorod by Zechariah (15th century), I 36
carried to Moscow (1480), I 36
- finds adherents at court, I 36
leaders of, burned at stake, I 37
checked, I 37
instills fear of Jews, I 37, 242, 249
spreads in Central Russia (1796), I 401 f
severe measures adopted against (1823), I 402 f
quoted by Senate as proof of Jewish proselytism, I 404
Reformation in Poland regarded as, I 79 f
Christian rationalists in Poland nicknamed "Judaizers," I 136
- Jude, Der**, German-Jewish periodical, published by Riesser, II 219
- Judea**, part of Hellenistic Orient, I 14
Jewish colonies, in, II 375
- Judicial Authority**, see Courts
- Jüdisch-Deutsch**, see Yiddish
- Jüdische Bibliothek**, Yiddish periodical, edited by I. L. Peretz, III 59.
- Jüdische Volksbibliothek**, Yiddish periodical, edited by Shalom Aleichem, III 59
- Jüdischer Verlag**, in Berlin, referred to, III 52
- Jüdisches Volksblatt**, Yiddish weekly in St. Petersburg, III 58 f

- Justinian**, emperor of Byzantium, persecutes Jews, I 18
- Jutrzenka** ("The Dawn"), organ of Polish-Jewish assimilationists, II 213
- Kaffa** (now Theodosia), Crimea, maintains commercial relations with Kiev, I 33
becomes Genoese colony and international emporium, I 33 f
Jews flock to, I 34
taken by Turks (1475), I 34
Khoza-Kokos, Jewish native of, exercises great influence, I 35
Jews, expelled from Lithuania, emigrate to, I 65
- Kahal** (Jewish community), under Polish régime, forms cultural, national, and civil entity, I 103
signifies "community" and "communal administration," I 105
autonomy of, recognized by Casimir the Great, I 52
fully established by Sigismund II. (1551), I 106 f
organization of, I 106 f
elections to, I 192
oligarchic character of, I 192 f
functions of, I 107 f
acts as fiscal agency, I 107, 181; and valued as such by Government, 189 f
manages Jewish institutions, I 107
executes civil acts, I 107, 190
supervises elementary education, I 114 f
has separate judiciary, I 83, 191
elders of, attached to general courts, I 84
K. chamber serves as a seat of judiciary, I 191 f
relation of, to Polish authorities, I 191
federation of K's., I 104, 108 f, 112, 193, 196 f
Conferences (or *Waads*), of federated K's., I 108 ff
relation of K's. to one another, I 193
minor K's. called *Pri-Kahalki*, I 108, 193
autonomy of, stimulates learning, I 121; exerts beneficent effect on Jewish life, I 189
Polish Jews exhorted by rabbis to obey K's., I 188 f
Blackmailed by Polish officials, I 169
K. of Brest ordered by authorities to hold elections (1719), I 192
K. of Lemberg receives constitution from *voyevoda* (1692), I 191 f
court of Vilna K. excommunicates Hasidim (1772), I 237

- K. of Vilna engages in litigation with rabbis, I 275 f
 financial indebtedness of K's., I 290
 degeneration of, I 274 ff
 Jews of Minsk complain against (1782), I 275
 Simeon Volfovich of Vilna urges abolition of (1738), I 276
 abolition or curtailment of, urged by Poles, I 280 ff
 weakening of, recommended by Kalmansohn (1796), I 335
 defended by Hirsch Yosefovich, rabbi of Khelm, I 283
 supervision over, recommended by Abraham Hirschovich, I 284
 abolition of, recommended by Committee of Polish Government (1815), II 89
 abolition of, favored by Polish-Jewish assimilationists, II 101
 criticised by David Friedländer, II 90
 abolished in Poland (December 20, 1821-January 1, 1822), II 102
 superseded by "Congregational Board," II 102 f
 See also Autonomy and Courts
- Kahal (Jewish Community), under Russian régime, attitude of Government towards, I 308 ff
- admission of Jews to city government conflicts with separate organization, I 308
 Jews of annexed White Russia in K's. (1772), I 308
 sanctioned by Senate (1776), I 309
 granted right to issue passports, I 309
 charged with collection of state taxes, I 309
 endowed with judicial powers, I 309
 Government changes attitude towards, I 310
 confined to religious and fiscal functions (1786), I 313
 deprived of civil and judicial powers (1795), I 319
 promise of Government to maintain judicial powers of, violated, I 320
 preservation of, due to fiscal considerations, I 320, 366
 establishment of, in Courland, due to same motives (1799), I 321
 curtailed status of, recognized in Statute of 1804, I 344
 admission to city government fails to weaken power of, I 368 ff
 Government forced to extend functions of, I 367
 Government communicates with K's., I 336, 339

- K. of Minsk decides to send delegation to St. Petersburg (1802), I 336
- K's. invited by Government to elect deputies (1803), I 337; (1806), I 349
- ordered to assist Jews expelled from villages (1810), I 351
- represented at army headquarters (1812), I 358
- elected representatives of K's., called "Deputation of Jewish People," act as advisory council to Government (1818-1825), I 393 ff
- K. of Grodno entrusted with police duties (1812), I 357
- Alexander I. receives K. of Kalish, I 358
- Alexander I. assures K's. of his high favor (1814), I 359
- K. of Minsk inquires about attitude of Vilna Gaon towards Hasidism, I 373
- Gaon issues appeal to K's. against Hasidism (1796), I 373
- Hasidim kept within K. by Statute of 1804, I 379
- demoralized by hasidic schism, I 371, 379
- suppression of, advocated by nobility of Lithuania (1809), I 326; and Dzerzhavin (1800), I 332
- made responsible for supply of recruits (1827), II 19 f
- K's. directed to elect recruiting trustees, II 19
- trustees of, turned into police agents, II 22 f
- K. of Vilna complains to Council of State about oppression of Jews, II 38 f; pleads for abolition of cantonists, II 36 f
- functions of, regulated by Statute of 1835, II 41
- Council of State criticises power of (1840), II 47; and suggests dissolution of, II 49
- abolished by Nicholas I. (December 19, 1844), II 59 ff
- retained as fiscal and recruiting agency, I 60 ff
- demoralized condition of, II 112
- elders of, made personally responsible for quota of recruits (1850), 147 f
- misdeeds of, portrayed by Mapu, II 227; by Gordon, II 230; by Bogrov, II 241
- Brafman accuses Jews of secret continuation of, in Russia, II 188; and of organizing international "World K.," II 189
- minutes of K. of Minsk serve as incriminating material, II 189
- Brafman's "Book of K." printed and distributed by Government, II 190; serves

- as material for "Jewish Committee," II 193; influences reports of governors, II 194
- Russian officials repeat Brafman's charges concerning K's., II 194 f
- Alliance Israélite* of Paris accused of constituting World K., II 189, 194
- Society for Diffusion of Enlightenment accused of forming part of, II 216
- Jewish Conference in St. Petersburg solemnly denies charges concerning K. (1882), II 307 f
- Pahlen Commission questions Jewish experts in regard to (1888), II 369 f
- See also Municipality and Autonomy
- Kaidanover, Aaron Samuel**, rabbi of Cracow, Hebrew author, I 200
- Kaidanover, Hirsch**, son of former, Hebrew author, I 202
- Kakhanov**, governor-general of Vilna, rebukes Jewish deputations of welcome, II 383
- Kalarash** (government of) pogrom at, III 128
- Kalayev**, Russian revolutionary, assassinates Grand Duke Sergius, III 110
- Kalinovski**, Polish commander, defeated by Cossacks, I 145
- Kalish**, leading city of Great Poland, I 42
- Synod of, issues canonical laws against Jews, I 57, 62
- surrenders to Swedes, I 155
- city and province of, annexed by Prussia, I 292
- Jews settle in, I 41
- Jews of, petition Casimir IV for renewal of charter, I 61
- communities in province of, destroyed, I 156
- Alexander I. receives Kahal of, I 358
- Abel Gumbiner, head of yeshibah in, I 200
- Warta, in province of, place of Polish Diet, I 58
- Kalkreuth**, Count, patron of Solomon Maimon, I 240
- Kalman**, Jewish printer in Lublin, I 131
- Kalmansohn**, Jacques, author of pamphlet advocating Jewish reforms in Poland, I 385
- Kalmanovich**, Jewish lawyer, acts as council for Jewish victims of Kishinev pogrom, III 91; and of Homel pogrom, III 102
- Kalmycks**, tribe of, I 367
- Kamenetz-Podolsk** (Podolia), Dembrowski, bishop of, arranges disputation at, I 214 f

- Talmud burned at, I 215
 Vilna Gaon appeals against Hasidim to Kahal of, I 373
 pogrom at, III 128
- Kaniev** (Ukraine), Starosta of, maltreats Jews, I 169
- Kant, Immanuel**, praises Solomon Maimon, I 240
- Kantakuzenka** (government of Kherson), pogrom at, III 33
- Karabchevski**, Russian lawyer, acts as council for Jewish victims of Kishinev pogrom, III 91
- Karaïtes**, in Byzantine empire, I 28
 in Crimea, I 28 f
 in Chufut-Kale (Crimea), I 35
 in Lithuania, I 60
 K. of Lithuania, receive autonomy from Casimir IV., I 61
 autonomy of K's. of Troki confirmed by Alexander Yaguello, I 64
 form separate municipality in Troki, I 73
 K's. of Tavrida granted equal rights, I 318 f; II 160
 excluded from bar but unofficially admitted, II 352 f
 Isaac Troki, Karaïte, author of anti-Christian treatise, I 137 f
 Simha Pinsker, historian of, II 160
- Karaulov**, deputy to Third Duma, defends Jews, III 156
- Karlin**, near Pinsk (government of Minsk), Hasidim establish themselves in, I 372
 Aaron of, hasidic leader, I 234
 Solomon of, hasidic leader, I 372
- "Karliners,"** nickname for Hasidim in Lithuania, I 372, 375
- Karnyeyev**, governor of Minsk, inquires into condition of peasantry, I 322 f
- Karpov**, member of "Jewish Committees," advocates Jewish emancipation, II 196 ff
- Karpovich** (government of Chernigov), pogrom at, II 315
- Kattowitz** (Prussia), conference of "Lovers of Zion," at, II 376
- Katzaps**, nickname for Great-Russians in Little Russia, II 248; III 115, 117
- Katzenellenbogen, Saul**, rabbi of Vilna, objects to heterodoxy of Menashe Ilyer, II 115 f
- Kauffmann**, governor-general of Vilna, appoints commission to investigate Brafman's charges, II 189
- Kaulbars**, military governor of Odessa, fails to check pogrom, III 129
- Kazan** (Central Russia), Jews of Vitebsk exiled to (1654), I 154

- cantonists stationed in, II 25
 suicide of cantonists in, II 27
 mosques destroyed in govern-
 ment of, I 254
- Kazimiezh** (*Polish*, Kazimierz),
 suburb of Cracow, estab-
 lished as Jewish ghetto, I 64
 Jews of, restricted in business,
 I 75
- Kedars**, name for Polovtzi, con-
 querors of Crimea, I 29
- Kempster**, United States com-
 missioner, sent to Russia, II
 407
- Keneset Israel**, Hebrew period-
 ical, II 372, III 58
- Kerch**, pogrom at, III 120; see
 Bosphorus
- Kertz**, Crimean city, probably
 identical with Kerch, I 26
- Khagan**, title of Khazar king, I
 20 ff
- Khappers**, Yiddish name for re-
 cruiting agents, II 23
- Kharkov** (city), Jews permitted
 to visit fair of (1835), II 40
 Jews expelled from, II 319
 merchants of, protest against
 exclusion of Jews, II 319
Bilu, organization of Palestine
 pioneers, formed in, II 321
- Kharkov** (government), Jews
 permitted to visit fairs of
 (1734)*, I 251
- Gubernatorial Commission ap-
 pointed for, I 273
- governor of, condemns Jews,
 II 276; advocates school-
 norm, II 339
- Khazars**, various forms of name,
 I 18
- appear in Caucasus, I 19
- establish kingdom on Volga, I
 19
- penetrate as far as Kiev, I 19
- establish another center in
 Crimea, I 19 f
- church attempts conversion of,
 I 20
- converted to Judaism, I 20 f
- invite teachers from Baby-
 lonia, I 21
- inner life of, I 22
- Jewish merchants travel
 through kingdom of, I 23
- Jews of Byzantium flee to, I
 23 f
- Hasdai Ibn Shaprut corre-
 sponds with king of, I 24 ff
- K's, defeated by Russians, I 28
- withdraw to Crimea, I 28
- K's. in Crimea destroyed by
 Russians and Byzantines, I
 28
- relatives of last king of, flee
 to Spain, I 28
- Jews from kingdom of, attempt
 conversion of Vladimir, I
 30
- settle in principality of Kiev,
 I 31

* The text has 1774 by mistake.

- civilizing influence of, on Kiev, II 252
- Khazars, Sea of**, name for Caspian Sea, I 23
- Khazaria**, name for Crimea, I 28 ff
- Khelm** (province of Lublin), bishop of, imprisons Jews on charge of host desecration, I 86
- rabbi of, author of Polish pamphlet defending Jews, I 283
- Kherson** (city), visited by White, emissary of Baron Hirsch, II 418
- Kherson** (government), seat of Zaporozhian Cossacks, I 143
- Jews settled as agriculturists in, I 363 f, II 71
- included in Pale (Statute of 1835), II 40
- pogroms in, II 251, 304, III 33, 100
- governor of, deplures effect of Jews on their domestics, I 404
- Localities in:
- Alexandria, III 100
- Anayev, II 251
- Borki, II 378
- Kantakuzenka, III 33
- Khlopitzki**, Polish dictator, declines offer of Jewish volunteers, II 105
- Khlops**, nickname for Polish peasants, I 140, 182; see Serfs
- Khmelnitzki** (*Polish*, Chmelnicki), Bogdan, I 144 ff
- elected Hetman by Cossacks, I 144
- forms alliance with Tartars of Crimea, I 144
- defeats Polish army, I 145
- heads rebellion of Ukrainians against Poles, I 145
- organizes massacre of Jews, I 145
- sends detachment of Cossacks against Niemirov, I 146
- derides Polish generals, I 149
- besieges Lemberg, I 150 f
- demands delivery of Jews, I 151
- receives ransom and withdraws, I 151
- defeated by Poles, I 152
- signs Treaty of Byelaya Tzerkov (1651), I 152
- enters into negotiations with Tzar Alexis, I 152 f
- extent of K. massacres, I 157
- recollection of K. massacres stirs later Ukrainians, I 182, 185
- reports of K. massacres arouses Sabbatai Zevi, I 205
- K. massacres described by Gogol, II 129; and Bogrov, II 242
- See Cossacks

- Kholonyevski**, member of Polish Diet, objects to extension of Jewish rights, I 288
- Khomyakov**, Russian poet, condemns régime of Nicholas I., II 141
- Khovanski**, governor-general of White Russia, ordered to provide livelihood for Jews expelled from villages, I 406 recommends discontinuation of expulsion, I 407 recommends proceedings in ritual murder trial of Velish, II 76 ff believes to have discovered monstrous crime, II 78 asks governors of Pale for incriminating material, II 80 censured by Nicholas I., II 80 exposed as Jew-baiter by Council of State, I 81
- Khoza Kokos**, Jew of Crimea, agent of Grand Duke Ivan III. of Moscow, I 35 arranges alliance between grand duke and Khan of Crimea, I 35 writes to Ivan III. in Hebrew, I 35
- Khwarism**, city in Asia, I 26
- Kiev** (city), Khazars make raids on, I 19 captured by Lithuanians (1320), I 94 forms part of Polish empire, I 94, 140 incorporated, together with Little Russia, in Russian empire (1654), I 94 ceded to Russia by Poland (1667), I 159 Metropolitan of Greek-Orthodox Church resides in, III 125 Jews settle in, I 31 Jews and Khazars in, II 252 Khazar Jews appear in, to convert Prince Vladimir (986), I 30 f Greek-Orthodox priests in, preach hatred against Jews, I 31 pogroms at (12th century), I 32 Jews of, protected by Prince Svyatopolk II., I 32 fire at, damages Jews (1124), I 32 "Jewish Gate" at, mentioned in Russian *Chronicles*, I 32 visited by early Jewish travellers, I 32 f Jews, fleeing from Germany, settle in, I 33 Moses, rabbi of, mentioned in early Hebrew sources, I 33 "Skharia," Jew of, settles in Novgorod (15th century), I 36 burghers of, obtain right of excluding Jews (1619), I 95 Jews permitted to settle in (1794), I 317, II 31

- Nicholas I. orders expulsion of Jews from (1827), II 30 ff
 authorities of, secure postponement of expulsion, II 33
 Nicholas I. insists on expulsion from, II 36
 closed to Jews by Statute of 1835, II 40
 Jews permitted to visit K. temporarily, II 172
 privileged categories of Jews settle in (under Alexander II.), II 264
 Government agents prepare pogrom at (after accession of Alexander III.), II 248
 pogrom at (April, 1881), II 251 ff, 287; tried in court, II 264
 "illegal" Jews expelled from (May, 1881), II 263 f
 wholesale expulsions of Jews from (1882), II 319
 (1886), II 346
 Jews of, subjected to raids, or *oblaras*, II 346; III 20
 wives of Jewish artisans in, forbidden to trade, II 385
 visited by White. emissary of Baron Hirsch, II 418
 persecution of Jews in (under Nicholas II.), III 19 f
 Jews made to pay for night raids, III 20
 Government frustrates project of trade bank in, III 25 f
 Russian Nationalist Society of, incites to pogroms, III 114
 pogrom at (October, 1905), III 128
 Jewish students excluded from Polytechnicum at (1907) III 152
 1200 Jewish families expelled from (1910), III 157
 Stolypin assassinated at (1911), III 164
 impending pogrom at, stopped, III 165
 Beilis ritual murder case in, III 165 f
 Jewish printing-press in, II 43; transferred to Zhitomir, II 43
 Jewish printers of Slavuta imprisoned in, II 123
 Censorship Committee in, ordered to examine Jewish books, II 44
 Professor Mandelstamm, resident of, II 298, 304, III 47
 Dashevski, avenger of Kishinev pogrom, student in, III 81
Jüdisches Volksblatt appears in, III 59
 Kiev (province, or government), subject to Poland, I 140
 estate in, owned by Polish nobles, I 140
 ceded to Russia (1667), I 159
 part of, annexed by Russia (1793), I 292

- Jews of, flee to Tatars (1648),
I 145
- Jews forbidden to settle in
(1649), I 151
- Jews in part of, exterminated,
I 157
- few Jewish survivors in, I 246
- Haidamacks massacre Jews
in (1768), I 183 f
- included in Pale (1794), I
317; (1804), I 342; (1835),
II 40
- Jewish deputies from, arrive
in St. Petersburg (1803), I
337
- Jews of, invited to send dele-
gates to city of Kiev (1807),
I 349
- Hasidism spreads in, I 382;
II 119 f
- Jews expelled from villages in
(1830), II 32; expulsion
postponed until 1835, II 33
- number of Jewish artisans in,
II 168
- Poles and Jews forbidden to
acquire estates in (1864),
II 173
- economic activity of Jews in,
II 194
- pogroms in (1881), II 256 f
- Court of Appeals of, tries
Homel pogrom, III 101
- Localities in:
Berdychev, II 256 f
Chernobyl, I 382, II 119
- Ruzhin, II 120
- Shpola, III 33
- Smyela, II 256
- Uman, I 184 f, 383, II 122
- Bibikow, governor-general of,
condemns Jews, II 47; ar-
rests Israel of Ruzhin, II
120 f
- Vasilchikov, Count, favors
transfer of Jewish artisans
to Russian Interior, II 168
- Dondukov, Korsakov, points
out economic danger of Jews,
II 193 f
- Drenteln, fierce anti-Semite, II
276, 316 f, 319, 341
- Kiev**, principality of, claims over-
lordship over Russian lands,
I 29
- influenced by Byzantium, I
29 ff
- passes under sovereignty of
Tatars, I 33; see Kiev (city)
- Kievanin**, anti-Semitic paper in
Kiev, III 20
- Kings**, Polish, favor Jews be-
cause of financial advan-
tages, I 69
- elected by Poles, I 89
- keep Jewish body-physicians,
I 132
- counteracted by Diets, I 160
- lose their authority, I 168
- Kirgiz**, tribe, placed in Russian
law above Jews, II 367

- Kiselev**, count, appointed chairman of Committee for Radical Transformation of Jews (1840), II 50, 157
 addressess circular to governors-general concerning projected Jewish reforms (1845)*, II 65 f
 receives petitions in favor of Jews from Moses Montefiore, II 688
 advocates mitigation of Jewish restrictions (1856), II 157
- Kishinev**, modern Jewish school in, II 52
 Jews of, accord friendly reception to Max Lillienthal, II 56
 "Congregation of New Testament Israelites" in, II 225
 "Smugglers," anti-Semitic play, produced in, III 38
 pogrom at (1903), III 69 ff;
 stirs Jewish national sentiment, III 82; avenged by Jewish youth, II 81, 132;
 stimulates emigration, III 85; intensifies animosity of Nicholas II., III 93; tried in court, III 90 ff
 authorities of, impeached before Senate, III 92
 Jews accused of seeking to avenge K. massacre, III 95, 101
 fear of new pogrom at, causes emigration, III 96 f
- Russian Nationalist Society of, incites to pogroms, III 114
 pogrom at (October, 1905), III 128
 Jewish community of, protests against denial of Jewish franchise, III 121
- Kitovich**, Polish writer, accuses Jews of ritual murder, I 180
- Klaus**, name for hasidic house of prayer, II 124
- Klausner**, Joseph, Hebrew writer, editor of *ha-Shiloah*, III 58, 163
- Klopstock**, German poet, imitated in Hebrew, II 135
- Kmita**, Peter, voyevoda of Cracow, accepts bribes from Jewish merchants, I 76
- Kobrin** (province of Grodno), Bezalel of, Hebrew author, I 201
- Kochubay**, Minister of Interior, appointed chairman of Committees for Amelioration of Jews (1802), I 335 f
 instructs governors to allay fears of Jews, I 336
 assisted by Speranski, I 340
 recommends postponement of expulsion of Jews from villages, I 347
 assists settlement of Jewish agriculturists in New Russia, I 363

* The text has 1815 by mistake.

- accepts dedication of pamphlet by Nyevakhovitch, I 387
 recommends severe measures against "Judaizers," I 402
- Koenigsburg** (Prussia), visited by Solomon Maimon, I 239
 visited by Menashe Ilyer, II 114
 Jewish socialists arrested in, III 223 f
 Hebrew periodicals published in, II 223
- Kohan, Jacob**, Hebrew poet, III 162
- Kohen, Sabbatai**, see Cohen
- Kokovtzev**, Minister of Finance, favors Jewish franchise, III 122
- Kol Mebasser**, Yiddish periodical, II 218
- Kollontay** (*Polish*, Kollontaj), radical member of Polish Diet, I 280
 suggests abolition of Jewish autonomy, I 282
 assists Jews in struggle for rights, I 291
- Kolomea** (Galicia), capital of Pokutyie province, I 150
- Konigsberg**, see Koenigsberg
- Konotop** (government of Chernigov), pogrom at, intensified by Jewish self-defence, II 257
- Koppelman, Jacob**, Hebrew author, I 133
- Koretz** (Volhynia), Phineas of, disciple of Besht, I 227
- Korff**, Baron, advocates admission of Jewish artisans into Russian Interior, II 170
- Korobka**, or basket tax, name explained, II 61; see Tax
- Korolenko**, Russian writer, signs protest against Jewish persecutions, II 387
 writes public letter in defence of Jews, II 388
 portrays Kishinev massacre, III 76 f
- Korostyshev**, hasidic center, II 120
- Korsun** (province), Poles defeated by Cossacks at (1648), I 145
- Kosciuszkow**, spelling and pronunciation of name, I 292
 leads Polish uprising of 1794, I 292
 liberal and democratic, I 292 f
 permits formation of Jewish regiment, I 294
 announces it in special army order, I 294 f
 captured by Russians, I 296
 Zayonchek, general under, I 296, II 91
- Kosovo** (Galicia), Besht settles in, I 223
 Nahman of, disciple of Besht, I 227
- Kostantinia**, Sea of, name for Black Sea, I 26

- Kostomarov**, Russian historian, defends ritual murder libel, II 205
- Kotzebue**, governor-general of New Russia, fails to check Odessa pogrom (1871), II 192
- Kotzk** (*Polish*, Kock), near Warsaw, Berek Yoselevich killed in vicinity of, I 303
hasidic dynasty of, II 122
- Kovalevski**, Minister of Public Instruction, advocates admission into Russian Interior of graduates of secondary schools, II 164
- Kovno** (city), Jews of, barred from city government (1805), I 370
growth of pauperism in, III 24
"Bund" holds convention in (1899), III 57
Jewish community of, signs petition for equal rights (1905), III 108
Abraham Mapu, Hebrew writer, native of, II 226 ff
Isaac Elhanan Spector, rabbi of, II 304
- Kovno** (government), part of, called Zhmud, I 293, II 133
formed originally part of government of Vilna, I 317
constituted 1872, I 317
forms part of Lithuania, II 39
- vitaly affected by expulsion of Jews from border zone (1843), II 63
- placed under military dictatorship of Muravyov (1863), II 188
- Lutostanski, anti-Semitic writer, priest in, II 203
- Friedman from, deputy to Third Duma, III 153
- Localities in:
Dusyaty, III 115
Salant, II 133
Vilkomir, II 236
- Kozhenitz** (Poland), Israel of, hasidic leader in Poland, I 384, II 122
- Kozhmyan**, member of Polish Council of State, objects to emancipation of Jews, II 93
- Kozlovskia**, witness in ritual murder case of Velizh, II 82
- Kozodavlev**, Russian assistant-minister of Interior, member of "Jewish Committee," I 352
- Kozubales**, tax to Catholic academies in Poland. I 161, 166
- Kramskityk**, president of Warsaw community, arrested for participating in Polish Insurrection, II 181
- Krasinski**, Vincent, Polish general, author of pamphlet on Jews of Poland, II 96 f

- Kraushar**, quoted, I 136
- Krechatinikov**, Russian general, captures Haidamack leaders, I 186
- Kremenchug** (government of Poltava), pogrom at (October, 1905), III 128
- Kremenetz** (Volhynia), Jewish community of, represented on Council of Four Lands, I 110
massacre at (1648), I 149
Mordecai Jaffe, rabbi of, I 127
native place of Isaac Baer Levinsohn, II 125 ff *
- Kremsier** (Moravia), meeting-place of Austrian Parliament, II 179
- Kreslavka** (government of Vitebsk), Frank, Jewish physician, resident of, I 331, 386
- Krestentzya**, form of lease, forbidden to Jews, I 404 f
- Kretingen** (province of Zhmud), Berek Yoselovich born at, I 293
- Krochmal**, Nahman, Galician thinker, associates with Isaac Baer Levinsohn, II 126
work of, compared with that of Levinsohn, II 127
- Kronenberg**, convert, protests against Polish anti-Semitism, II 178
- Kronenstadt**, fortress near St. Petersburg, place of imprisonment, II 42
- Krueger**, Russian official, accuses Jews of Saratov of ritual murder, II 151
- Krushevan**, journalist and petty official in Kishinev, III 69
editor of *Bessarabetz*, III 69 ff
carries on violent agitation against Jews, III 69 ff
invited by Plehve to publish *Znamya*, anti-Semitic paper, in St. Petersburg, III 70
accuses Jews of ritual murder, III 71
incites to pogroms, III 71
wounded by Dashevski, III 81 f
- Krushnitsa**, ancient Polish capital, Jew elected king at, I 40
- Krysa, Leib**, represents Frankists at religious disputation, I 217
baptized, I 217
- Kuantung** (Shantung) Peninsula, Jews expelled by Russians from, III 94
- Kukhazhevski** (*Polish*, Kucharzewski), Polish anti-Semitic candidate to Russian Duma, defeated by Warsaw Jews, III 167
- Kulak**, Russian name for village boss, II 318, 325

* P. 125, line 3 from below, read "Volhynia," instead of "Podolia."

- Kupernik, Jewish lawyer, acts as council for victims of Homel pogrom, III 102
- Kursk (government), number of artisans in, II 168
- Kut, Crimean city, I 26
- Kutais (city in Caucasus), ritual murder case at, II 204
- Kutaysov, Count, declares pogroms result of Jewish "exploitation," II 271
- Kutover, Gershon, rabbi of Brody, brother-in-law of Besht, I 223
receives message from Besht in Palestine, I 228
- Kuty (Galicia), Besht settles in neighborhood of, I 228
- Kuyavia, former Polish province, I 75; II 90
- Ladi (government of Moghilev), residence of Shneur Zalman, founder of *Habad*, and his successors, I 234; II 117
- Lakh, Ukrainian nickname for Pole, I 142, 184
- Lambat, Crimean city, I 26
- Lamoderff, Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, has interview with Herzl, III 84
- Landed Property, see Villages
- Landau, Adolph, Russian-Jewish publicist, II 221
- Langage, use of Polish L., abandonment of Yiddish, and restriction of Hebrew advocated by Poles (1783-1791), I 273, 281
- use of Polish in business [and elimination of Hebrew and Yiddish] advocated by Friesel, governor of Vilna (1800), I 327
- use of Russian, Polish, or German in legal documents and in business suggested by Dyerzhavin (1800), I 333
- Russian, Polish, or German made obligatory for Jewish schools and for public documents and business [Statute of 1804], I 345
- reading and writing knowledge of Russian, Polish, or German required for Jewish members of municipalities [Statute of 1804], I 345
- Jewish deputies plead for use of Hebrew in business, I 349 f
- followers of David Friedländer call upon Polish Jews to abandon Yiddish and adopt L. of country, I 386
- Statute of 1855 requires use of Russian, or other local dialect, for public and business documents, and forbids Hebrew categorically, II 40
- Kahal elders required to read and write Russian [1835], II 41

- Isaac Baer Levinsohn calls on Jews to study L. of country, II 126
- Jews of Poland forbidden use of Hebrew and Yiddish in civil affairs, legal documents, and business correspondence [Act of 1862], II 182
- Jews of Poland retain use of their L., II 195
- freedom of L. demanded by League for Equal Rights [1905], III 112
- fight between Hebrew and Yiddish (1908), III 161
- See Hebrew, Polish, Russian, and Yiddish
- Lanskoy**, Minister of Interior, favors admission into Russian Interior of Jewish graduates of secondary schools, II 164
- corresponds with officials concerning admission of Jewish artisans into Russian Interior, II 163
- Lantzkrona** (*Polish*, Lanekorona, Podolia), assembly of Frankists at fair of, I 213, 215
- Lapin**, Shalom, of Grodno, suspected of ritual murder, II 73
- Lapkovski**, Benish, from government of Vitelsk, elected Jewish deputy, I 393
- Laski**, John, Polish chancellor, edits Polish code of laws, I 71
- Laschenko** organizes pogrom at Ananyev, government of Kherson, II 251
- Lavrov**, Russian revolutionary in London, II 223
- Layze** (Lazarus), son of Jewish arendar, I 266
- Lazhentska**, Dorothy, of Sokhachev, sentenced on charge of having sold host to Jews, I 86
- League for the Attainment of Equal Rights for the Jewish People in Russia**, the, organized in Vilna (1905), III 111
- program of, III 111 f
- establishes Central Bureau in St. Petersburg, III 112
- conventions of, III 131, 133 f
- protests against pogroms, III 132
- sends greetings to Dashevski, avenger of Kishinev pogrom, III 132
- decides to call All-Russian Jewish National Assembly, III 133
- Jewish Duma deputies accept program of, III 134
- presided over by Vinaver, III 134

- represents doctrine of National-Cultural Autonomism, III 144
- stands above class and party affiliations, III 145 f
- disintegration of, III 146 f
- League of Jewish Socialists, in London, II 223
- League of Jewish Workingmen, see "Bund"
- League of Russian People, organization of Black Hundred, III 141
- favors re-establishment of unlimited autoeracy, III 149
- secures pardon for pogrom makers, III 150
- forms "Second Government," III 141, 151
- badge of, demonstratively worn by Nicholas II., III 151
- See Black Hundred
- "Learned Jew" (*Uchenyy yevrey*), Russian title for Jewish Government expert, II 239
- Lebensohn, Abraham Baer (called "Adam"), Hebrew poet, II 134 f
- prominent in Maskilim circle of Vilna, II 136
- Lebensohn, Micah Joseph, son of former, Hebrew poet, II 226
- Legal Profession, see Bar
- Leipsic, Russian-Jewish merchants visit fair of, I 359 f
- place of publication, II 135
- Lekkert, Hirsch, shoots at governor of Vilna, III 67
- Lelevel (*Polish*, Lelewel), Polish historian, issues manifesto to Jews, II 107 f
- calls upon Poles to be friendly to Jews, II 178
- eulogized by Jews at memorial service, II 180
- Lemberg (*Lvov, Polish*, Lwow), leading city of Red Russia, I 74, 196
- anti-Jewish riots in (1463), I 63 f
- Jews of, restricted in commerce, I 74
- besieged by Khmelnitzki (1618), I 150 f
- authorities of, refuse to deliver Jews, I 151
- Jesuit college students in, attack Jews, I 161
- Jews of, organize self-defence, I 161; but are massacred (1664), I 162
- Pikolski, monk in, conducts agitation against Jews, I 174
- Jews of, receive communal autonomy (1356), I 53; granted communal constitution (1692), I 191
- rights of Kahal elders upheld by voyevoda of, I 190
- Jewish community of, represented on Council of Four Lands, I 110

- rabbis assembled at, excommunicate adherents of Sabatai Zevi, I 211
- disputation between Frankists and Orthodox at, I 216 f, 229
- conversion of Frankists at, I 217
- Isaiah Horowitz (*Sheloh*) educated in, I 135
- Rabbis of:
- Joshua Falk Cohen, head of yeshibah, I 128
 - David Halevi (*Taz*), I 130, 206
 - Meir of Lublin, I 129
 - Hayyim Rapoport, I 216
 - Solomon, I 115
- Le Nord**, newspaper in Brussels, organ of Russian Government, II 393
- Lenchitza** (*Polish*, Leckyca, province of Kalish), Jews of, executed on ritual murder charge, I 100
- Solomon Ephraim of, criticises yeshibahs, I 119 f
- Leon**, Jewish physician, executed by Ivan III., I 37
- Leshek**, Polish prince, receives Jewish delegation from Germany, I 40
- Leshek The White**, Polish ruler, favorable to Jews, I 42
- Lesnaya** (White Russia), battle at, I 248
- Lessing**, referred to by Nye-vakhovich, Russian-Jewish writer, I 387
- Levanda, Leon (Lev)**, Russian-Jewish writer, native of Lithuania, II 238
- teacher in Jewish Crown school, II 239
- "Learned Jew" in Vilna, II 239 f
- novels by, II 239 f
- joins Palestine movement, II 240, 332
- corresponds with Bogrov, II 241
- Levendahl**, Russian official, inspires Kishinev massacre, III 71, 77
- Levi Itzhok**, of Berdichev, hasidic leader, I 232 f
- saintliness of, I 233, 382
- Hebrew author, I 382
- Levin, Shmaryahu**, member of Central Committee of League for Equal Rights, III 112
- deputy to First Duma, III 134
- denounces Bialystok pogrom, III 137, 139
- demanding equal rights for Jews, III 137
- Levinsohn, Isaac Baer**, called "the Russian Mendelssohn," II 125 ff
- born in Volhynia, II 125
- associates with Maskilim of Galicia, II 125 f

- author of *Te'udah le-Israel*, II 126; conclusions of, II 126
- author of anonymous anti-hasidic satire, II 127
- author of *Bel Yehudah*, II 127 f
- suggests plan of Jewish reforms, II 128; and modifications in Jewish religious life, II 129
- keeps in contact with Russian dignitaries, II 129 f
- receives subsidies from Russian Government, II 129, 132
- advocates prohibition of "harmful" books, II 129 f
- naivete* of, II 130
- publishes refutation of blood accusation, II 131
- author of apologetic treatise *Zerubbabel*, defending the Talmud, II 131
- compared with scholars in other lands, II 131
- dies unappreciated, II 132
- Levita, Benedict.** of Cracow, granted monopoly of importing Hebrew books, I 131
- Levy, Lipman**, financial agent at Russian Court, I 218
- Lewin, L.**, quoted, I 111
- Lewin, Mendel**, of Satanov (Podolia), Hebrew writer, I 388
- Liberum Veto**, Polish parliamentary law, source of anarchy, I 92, 105
- Lieberman, A. (Freeman)**, Jewish socialist, II 223 f
- Lieders**, Russian viceroy in Poland, arrests Jewish leaders, II 181
- Lieven**, Russian Minister of Public Instruction, receives memorandum from Isaac Baer Levinsohn, II 129
- Lifschitz, Gedaliah**, of Lublin, Hebrew author, I 123
- Lilienblum, Moses Leib**, advocates religious reforms, II 236
- joins Russified *intelligenzia*, II 237
- writes "Sins of Youth," II 237
- joins "Love of Zion" and later Zionist movement, II 237, 328 f, 376, III 42, 49
- Lillienthal, Max**, native of Bavaria, II 52
- director of modern Jewish school in Riga, II 52
- commissioned by Russian Government to carry out school reforms, II 53
- visits Vilna, II 54; meets with approval of local Maskilim, II 136 f
- meets with opposition in Minsk, II 55
- presents report to Uvarov, Minister of Public Instruction, II 55
- tears Russian South and South-west, II 56

- assured by Jewish communities of co-operation, II 56
- campaign of, hailed by Jewish leaders of western Europe, II 67
- not supported by Isaac Baer Levinsohn, II 136
- emigrates to America, II 59
- quoted, II 55
- Lippomano**, papal nuncio, instigates host trial of Sokhachev, I 86 f
- Liquor**, use of, encouraged by Hasidim, II 124 f
- Liquor Trade**, see Propination
- Literature**, rabbinic L. in Poland, I 121 ff; see also Hebrew, Yiddish, and Russian
- Lithuania**, Kiev incorporated in, I 94
- Volhynia annexed by, I 59
- "Union of Lublin," between Poland and L. (1569), I 88
- annexed by Russia (1795), I 297
- Jews emigrate from Crimea into, I 35
- important Jewish communities in, I 59
- Jews of, obtain charter from Vitovt (1388), I 59
- favorable economic condition of Jews in, I 60, 72 f
- Jewish tax farmers in, I 72, 94
- Karaites in, I 60
- Jews expelled from (1493), and allowed to return (1503), I 65, 70 f
- Jews of, suspected of sheltering proselytes, I 80; and of planning to leave country, I 81
- cleared of suspicion by royal charter (1540), I 81
- "**Lithuanian Statute**" (1566) imposes restrictions on Jews, I 87
- blood accusations in, I 87 f, 96, 162 ff
- "Union of Lublin" affects unfavorably Jews of, I 88
- Ukrainian rebels penetrate into, I 149
- invaded by Russians (1654 ff), I 153 ff, 156, 264
- Jews, persecuted by Cossacks, flee to, I 157
- Jewish cultural center moves to, I 159 f
- Jewish conditions in, described by Solomon Maimon, I 239 f
- Jews of, barred from Russia, I 243 f; yet penetrate into Moscow, I 245
- numbers of Jews in, I 263 f
- included in Pale (1795), I 317; (1804), I 342; (1835), II 39
- Polish nobility of, advocate Jewish reforms (1800), I 325 f

- Jews establish woolen mills in, I 363
- Jewish agricultural colonies in, II 72
- Jews admitted to municipal government in, I 369; but speedily disfranchised, I 370
- Jews of, loyal to Russia in Polish insurrections of 1861 and 1863, II 107, 182 f
- Russian authorities of, believe Brafman's charges against Jews, II 189
- pogroms checked in, II 267, 276
- Jewish labor movement in, III 55
- Jews of, called Litvaks, object of Polish anti-Semitism, III 166 f
- Jewish communities of, represented on Council of Four Lands, I 110; but later form separate Council (1623), I 112, 193 f, 195
- Michael Yosefovich appointed "senior" of Jews of, I 72
- Kahals of, granted right of *herem* (1672), I 190
- different intellectual development in, I 221
- strong position of Rabbinism and Talmudism in, I 109 f, 221, II 113
- Elijah of Vilna, champion of Rabbinism in, see Elijah of Vilna
- yeshibahs of, adopt method of Elijah of Vilna, I 381 f
- Messianism preached among Jews of, I 208
- Hasidim penetrates into, I 230 ff, 237
- type of Hasidism in, I 232 f
- rabbis of, oppose Hasidism, II 233, 237 f
- Kahals of, appealed to against Hasidism, I 373
- Hasidism weak in, I 274, 372
- Hasidim of, denounced to Russian authorities, I 376
- spirit of denunciation (*mesirah*) among Jews of, I 377 f
- disintegration of Kahals in, I 275 f
- Jews of, plead for preservation of Kahal courts, I 320
- greater political sense among Jews of, I 379
- rabbis of, arbitrate between Kahal and rabbi of Vilna, I 276
- rabbis of, appeal to I. B. Levinsohn to refute blood accusation, II 131
- opposition to secular learning among Jews of, II 114 f
- Haskalah movement in, see Haskalah and Vilna
- Hebrew writers originate from, II 238
- Little Poland, see Poland, Little
- Little Russia, see Russia, Little

- Livadia**, summer residence of Alexander III., II 429, III 18
- Livonia**, inhabitants of, demand admission of Jews, I 256
Empress Elizabeth refuses to admit Jews into, I 257
Jews expelled from (1744), I 257
Jewish newcomers expelled from (1829), II 32; see Baltic Provinces
- Lizno** (Galicia), Elimelech of, hasidic leader, I 232
- Lobanov-Rostoveki**, chairman of Committee for Amelioration of Jews (1871), II 191
- Lobzovo**, near Cracow, residence of Estherka, favorite of Casimir the Great, I 53
- Lodz**, Jewish labor movement in, III 55
pogrom at, III 119 f
economic success of Jews in, stimulate Polish boycott, II 166
- Loewenthal**, professor, sent by Baron Hirsch to Argentina, II 416
- Lokhvitz** (province), massacre at (1648), I 145
- London**, Moses Montefiore of, goes to Russia, II 68
M'Caul, missionary in, II 131
Jewish Socialist Society in, II 223
- Mansion House Meeting held in (February 1, 1882), II 288 ff
- Lord Mayor of, presides at meeting, II 288; and joins pogrom committee, II 291
bishop of, joins pogrom committee, II 291
secret circular of Plehve circulated in, II 381
new protest meeting planned in, II 382
- Guildhall Meeting held in (December 10, 1890), II 388 ff
effect of protest meeting in, felt in St. Petersburg, II 397 f
- Moscow refugees in, II 408
Jewish Colonization Association in, II 414, 419
- Fourth Zionist Congress held in, III 45
- L. Times* publishes account of pogroms and persecutions, II 287; attacks Russia, II 381, 389 f; publishes secret letter of Plehve, III 77
- Longinus**, see Dlogosh
- Lopukhin**, Russian prosecutor-general, receives denunciation against Hasidim, I 375 f
- Loris-Melikov**, Russian statesman, favors popular representation, II 245
discusses Jewish question with American Minister, II 293

Louis of Hungary, Polish king (1370-1382), persecutes Jews, I 54

Louisiana, Jewish agricultural colonies, in, II 374

"Love of Zion," see Zionism

Lovich, Synod of (1720), forbids building or repairing of synagogues, I 171

Lozno (government of Moghilev), residence of Shneur Zalman, founder of *Habad*, I 234, 330, 372, 376, 378, II 117

Lubavichi (government of Moghilev), residence of Shneur Zalman's successors, II 117

Lubbock, Sir John, protests against pogroms, II 288

Lubenski, Polish Minister of Justice, objects to emancipation of Jews, I 300 f
suggests law barring Jews from liquor trade, I 394

Lublin, leading city of Little Poland and capital of Poland, I 42, 110

"Union of" (1569), I 88

Lublin (province), annexed by Austria (1795), I 297
ritual murder cases in, I 96, 100

Crown Tribunal in, tries ritual murder cases, I 96, 100, 172

conference of rabbis and Kahal elders meet at, I 109 f, 123

Council of Four Lands meets periodically at, I 110, 152, 194

community of, receives royal permission to open yeshibah (1567), I 115

printing-press in, I 131, 196
disputations between Jews and Christians at, I 136

Gedaliah Lifschitz, Hebrew author, of, I 133

Jacob Itzhok, hasidic leader, of, I 384

Martin Chekhovich, Christian theologian, of, I 136

Rabbis of:

Shalom Shakhna, father of Polish Talmudism, I 105, 122 f

Israel, son of former, I 123

Joshua Falk Cohen, I 112, 128

Solomon Luria (*Maharshal*), I 125

Mordecai Jaffe, I 127

Meir of (*Maharam*), I 128 f, 199

Samuel Edels (*Mcharsho*), I 129

Towns in:

Shehebrechin, I 158

Voistovitza, I 178

Zamosheh, I 203

Lubliner, Polish-Jewish writer and patriot, II 109

- Lubny** (province of Poltava),
Cossack massacres at
(1637), I 144; (1648), I 145
- Lubomirski**, Polish Crown Mar-
shal, imposes tax on Jews
sojourning in Warsaw, I
268 f
- Lueger**, anti-Semitic burgo-
master of Vienna, III 32
- Luga** (government of St. Peters-
burg), Alexander I. causes
expulsion of Jews from, I
409
- Lukasinski**, Valerian, Polish
army officer, defends Jews.
II 97 f
- Lukov** (province of Shedletz), I
287
- Luria, Isaac (Ari)**, name ex-
plained, I 134
influence of Cabala system of,
on Poland, I 134, 202
study of writings of, forbidden
before age of forty, I 214
writings of, studied by Besht,
I 223
prayer-book of, accepted by
Hasidim, I 231
- Luria, Solomon** (Reshal or Ma-
harshal) native of Posen, I
124
rabbi in Ostrog and Lublin, I
125
follows casuistic method of
Tosafists, I 125
criticises *Shulhan Arukh*, I
125
- gravitates towards mysticism,
I 126
criticises study of Aristotle in
yeshibahs, I 120
leaves profound impress on
posterity, I 199
- Lutherans**, Isaac Troki argues
with, I 137; see Reformation
- Lutostanski, Hippolyte**, accuses
Jews of ritual murder, II
203 f.
receives acknowledgment from
Alexander III., 203, 244
- Lutzk (Volhynia)**, Crimean Jews
settle in, I 35
important Jewish community
in, I 59
Karaites in, I 60
Jews of, expelled (1495), I 65
- Lvov**, see Lemberg
- Lvov**, Russian statesman, dis-
closes connection between
Government and pogroms,
III 125 f
- Lyck (Prussia)**, *ha-Maggid*, pub-
lished in, II 217
- Lysyanka** (province of Kiev),
massacre at, I 184
- Maeotis**, see Azov, Sea of
- "Magdeburg Law," name ex-
plained, I 44
granted to Germans in Poland,
I 44
bestowed on city of Lemberg,
I 53

- granted to Karaites of Lithuania, I 61; and confirmed, I 64
- taken advantage of by Polish estates to oppress Jews, I 74
- Jews exempted from jurisdiction of, I 94
- Jewish Kahal forms counterpart to, I 103; see also Autonomy
- Magister**, Russian university degree, explained, II 165
- Magistracies**, see Municipalities
- Maimon, Solomon**, born in Lithuania, I 239
- receives talmudic education, I 239
- studies in Germany, I 239 f
- student of Kantian philosophy, I 240
- writes "Autobiography," I 240
- quoted, I 221
- Maimonides**, philosophic writings of, studied by Moses Isserles, I 126; and Mordecai Jaffe, I 132
- studied and interpreted by Solomon Maimon, I 240
- influences Shneur Zalmon, I 382
- does not appeal to Nahman of Bratzlav, I 383
- invoked by Maskilim in support of secular learning, II 126
- quoted, II 119
- Makarov** (government of Kiev), hasidic center, II 120
- Makov**, chairman of Commission for Revision of Laws concerning Jews, II 336
- Malakh, Hayyim**, Sabbatian propagandist, I 208
- joins Judah Hasid, I 209
- heads party of pilgrims to Palestine, I 209
- holds Sabbatian services in Jerusalem, I 210
- Melchevski**, Polish bishop, invites David Friedländer to render opinion on Polish-Jewish question, II 90
- Maliss, Eda**, victim of pogrom, II 302
- Manasseh, I., and II.**, kings of Khazars, I 26
- Manassein**, Minister of Justice, excludes Jews from Russian bar, II 352
- Mandelstamm**, successor to Max Lilienthal, II 118
- Mandelstamm**, professor, of Kiev, insists on necessity of organizing emigration, II 298
- attends conference of Jewish notables in St. Petersburg, II 304
- denounces Ignatyev's offer to settle Jews in Central Asia, II 306
- supports Zionist leaders in Western Europe, III 47

- Manifesto**, name explained, II 246
coronation M. of Alexander II. abolishes Jewish conscription, II 155 f
M. of Alexander III. promising to uphold autocracy, II 246
coronation M. of Alexander III. disregards Jews, II 338
M. of Nicholas II., on birth of heir-apparent Alexis, offers trifling alleviations to Jews, III 98
M. of October 17, promising Constitution, III 127; followed by pogroms, III 127 ff
Vyborg M., see Vyborg
- Mankup** (Mangup), Crimean city, I 26
- Manning**, cardinal, protests at Mansion House Meeting against pogroms, II 289 f
joins pogrom committee, II 291
expresses sympathy with Guildhall Meeting, II 390
- Mansion House Meeting**, see London
- Mapu**, Abraham, Hebrew writer, II 226 ff
- Margolis**, M., Jewish expert, invited by Pahlen Commission, II 369
- Marini**, general of Dominican Order, deprecates persecution of Polish Jews, I 165
- Mark** (Mordecai), victim of blood accusation, I 100
- Markovich**, Moses, "general syndic" of Polish Jews, I 160
- Marriage**, among Jews, restrictions placed upon, by Polish Diet (1775), I 267; disregarded, I 268
limitation of number of M's proposed by Poles, I 282
age of, restricted by Russian law (1835), II 40
early M's in vogue, II 112
- Marseilles**, Altaras of, visits Russia, II 69
- Masalski**, bishop of Vilna, employs Berek Yoselovich, I 294
- Maskilim**, see Haskalah
- Massacres**, see Pogroms
- Masudi**, Arabic writer, quoted, I 23 f
- May Laws**, see Temporary Rules
- Maximova**, witness in ritual murder case, II 82
- Mazovia**, Polish principality and province, I 42, 85
annexed by Prussia (1795), I 297
- M'Caul**, London missionary, attacks Talmud, II 131
- Me'assef**, Hebrew periodical, I 386; II 137
- Meat Tax**, see Tax
- Meath**, Earl of, addresses Guildhall Meeting, II 391

Mechanics, see Artisans

Mechislaw, prince of Great Poland, forbids violence against Jews, I 42

Mechislaw (Meshko), Polish king, mentioned on coins, I 42

Medicine, see Physicians

Medzhibozh (Podolia), Besht settles in, I 225

visited by his disciples, I 228
residence of Borukh Tulchinski, I 384; and his disciples, II 121

Meir of Lublin (Maharam), rabbi and scholar, I 128 f
leaves profound impress on posterity, I 199

Meir, of Shchebreshin, describes Cossack persecutions, I 158

Meir, of Tarnopol, Hebrew author, I 201

Meisels, Berush, rabbi in Cracow, and member of Austrian parliament, II 179

rabbi in Warsaw, and active in Polish Insurrection (1863), II 179 ff

Melammed, see Heder

Melitopol (government of Tavris), pogrom at, III 115

Melitzah, conventionalized Hebrew style, II 225, 228

Menahem, king of Khazars, I 26

Mendel, chief rabbi of Great Poland, I 104

Mendel Kotzker, hasidic leader, II 122

Mendel, of Lubavichi, see Shneursohn

Mendel, of Vitebsk, hasidic leader, I 234

Mendele Mokher Sforim, see Abramovich

Mendelssohn, Moses, "Father of Enlightenment," I 238, II 125

"Enlightenment" of, contrasted with Russian Has-kalah, II 137

followers of, among Polish and Russian Jews, I 239, 331, 384, 385, 387

Isaac Baer Levinsohn, called "the Russian M.," II 125

Bible translation of, rendered into Russian, II 118

David Friedländer, pupil of, approached by Polish Government, II 90

attacked by Smolenskin, II 235

Wessely, associate of, II 135

Mengli-Guiray, Khan of Crimea, communicates with prince of Moscow through Jewish agents, I 35 f

Menorah, represented on tombstones in Tauris, I 16

Merchants, the, form separate estate in Russia, I 308

exempted from military service, II 20

- called to military service (1874), II 200
- few first-guild Jewish M's. in Pale, II 162
- Jewish M. permitted temporary visit to Interior (1835), II 40
- admission of, into Interior voted down by Council of State, II 35 f; discussed by Committee for Amelioration of Jews, II 161 f
- Jewish first-guild M's. admitted into Interior (1859), II 62, 343
- attempt to exclude Jewish M's. from Interior (under Alexander III.), II 399
- permitted to remain in Moscow, III 14; but restricted in rights, III 15
- See Commerce
- Meshcherski**, Count, editor of anti-semitic weekly *Grazhdanin*, II 380, 413
- Meshko**, see Mechislav
- Mesirah** ("Informing") develops among Jews under Russian rule, I 377
- discharged rabbi of Pinsk engages in, I 377 f
- in Novaya Ushitza, II 84 f, 121
- in Mstislavl, II 85 ff
- Messianism**, preached in Poland, I 204 ff
- superseded by Hasidism, I 222
- defended by Smolenskin, II 235
- "Love of Zion" viewed with suspicion by Orthodox as rival of, II 377
- Messianic character of Political Zionism, III 48
- Methodius**, Slavonian missionary, engages in disputation with Jews, I 18
- Metternich**, represents Austria at Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle, I 399
- Mezherich** (or **Mezhirich**), Volhynia, hasidic center, I 229 f
- Baer of M., called "Mazhiricher Maggid," I 227, 229 f, 384, II 120
- Michinski**, Sebastian, Polish anti-Semitic writer, I 97
- Mickiewicz**, see Mitzkevich
- Mikhailishok** (government of Vilna), residence of Abraham Lebensohn, II 134
- Mikolski**, Polish priest, favors Frankists, I 216
- Mikweh Israel**, agricultural settlement in Palestine, II 322
- Miletus** (Asia Minor), Jewish community in, I 14
- Military Service** (or **Conscription**), Jews of Poland free from, I 304
- payment of ransom in lieu of, confirmed by Polish law (1812), I 304; (1817), II 95; (1831), II 107

imposed on Jews of Poland (1843), II 109
 imposed on Jews of Austria, II 30
 merchants in Russia exempted from, by paying conscription tax, I 318; II 15
 merchants subjected to (1874), II 200
 imposition of, on Jews planned by Alexander I., II 15
 conceived by Nicholas I. as means of de-Judaization, II 15
 danger of imposition of, on Jews set forth by Novosiltzev, II 16
 Jews alarmed by rumors concerning imposition of, II 17
 imposed upon Jews by conscription ukase of August 26, 1827, II 18 ff, ukase reaffirmed in Statute of 1835, II 41
 juvenile M. S., see Cantonists
 certain classes of Jews exempted from, II 20
 weight of, falls principally on burghers, II 29
 horrors of, II 24 ff, 27 ff, 145 ff
 Jews of Old-Constantinople "protest" against, II 21 f
 early marriages due to fear of, II 28
 alleviations in, proposed by Council of State and rejected by Nicholas I., II 36

ineffectiveness of, in reforming Jews pointed out by Council of State (1840), II 48
 term of, reduced for graduates of Crown schools (1844), II 58
 Jewish agriculturists exempted from, II 71
 shunned by Russians in general, II 146
 evaded by Jews, II 146
 barbarous penalties decreed for evasion of (1850), II 147 f
 severities of, repealed by Alexander II. (1856), II 155 ff
 tax in lieu of, proposed for graduates of secular schools and rejected (1859), II 164
 newly regulated by Law of 1874, II 199 ff
 discriminations against Jews in new M. S. Statute of 1874, II 200 f, 355
 evasion of, punished by fining family of recruit (1886), II 356
 fine for evasion of, stimulates emigration, II 373, 414
 Jewish emigrants relieved from, II 420
 See Army, Recruits, and Soldiers
 Milton, indirect effect of, on Hebrew literature, II 135

- Minor, rabbi of Moscow, refuses
blackmail offer of Lutostanski, II 203
- dismissed from office and exiled by Russian Government, II 423 f
- Minsk (city), Jews of, complain against abuses of Kahal, I 275
- Kahal of, decides to send deputation to Tzar, I 336
- Jews of, communicate with Jews of Vilna concerning Hasidism, I 373
- Max Lilienthal opposed by Jews of, II 55
- visited by Alexander II., II 187
- minutes of Kahal of, used by Braiman as incriminating material, II 189
- growth of pauperism in, III 24
- Convention of Russian Zionists at, III 45, 51, 59
- pogrom at, III 119
- Jewish community of, protests against denial of Jewish franchise, III 121
- Jehiel Halperin, rabbi of, I 200
- Naphtali, resident of, Hebrew author, I 201
- Pollak, resident of, offers to establish agricultural farms, III 25
- Minsk (province, or government), annexed by Russia (1793), I 292
- included in Pale (1794), I 316 f; (1804), I 342; (1835), II 39
- famine in, I 322 f
- Polish nobles of, propose restrictions for Jews, I 322 ff
- Jewish deputies from, active in St. Petersburg, I 337
- Jews of, asked to elect delegates, I 349
- massacre of Jews and Russians threatened by Poles in, I 357
- Solomon of Karlin killed by troops in, I 372
- placed under military dictatorship of Muravyov, II 188
- Braiman, accuser of Jews, native of, II 187
- Localities in:
Bobovnia, II 80
Mir, II 113
Nesvzh, I 239
- Mint, Polish, administered by Jews, I 42
- Mir (government of Minsk), yeshibah at, II 113
- Mishnah, term explained, II 114
- Mithnagdim, name of opponents of Hasidim, I 238, 372
- oppose Hasidim, I 274, 278, 372, 375
- Mitropolit, highest ecclesiastic title in Russia, III 125
- Mitzkevich (*Polish*, Myckiewicz), Adam, Polish poet friendly to Jews, II 108

Mizrahi, Orthodox Zionists, III 47

Mladanovich, Polish governor of Uman, betrays Jews, I 184
killed by Haidamucks, I 185

Mocatta, Moses, English translator of Isaac Troki's work, I 130

Modebadze, Sarre, Gruzinian girl, alleged victim of ritual murder, II 204

Moghilev, on the Dnieper (city), I 98

Jews of, transferred to outskirts of city (1633), I 98; and barred from Christian neighborhood (1646), I 98 f

Jews of, expelled by invading Russians (1654), I 153; and massacred by Russian soldiers, I 154, 245

echo of Sabbatian propaganda, in, I 205

rabbinical conference at, protests against Hasidism, I 238

Kahal of, appealed to by Vilna Gaon against Hasidism, I 373

Shmerling, deputy from, dies at St. Petersburg Conference (1882), II 304

pogrom at (1904), III 100 f; avenged by Jewish youth, III 107

Moghilev (government), forms part of White Russia, I 187, 262, 307

communities of, form federation, I 196

Polish Jewish prisoners of war from, form nucleus of Moscow community, I 245

Jews of, visit Smolensk and Moscow, I 315

made part of Pale (1794), I 317; (1835), II 40

Jewish deputies from, arrive in St. Petersburg (1803), I 337

Jews of, invited to send delegates (1807), I 319

Jews from apply to be settled as agriculturists in New Russia, I 363

Jews elected to municipal offices in, I 368

Jews expelled from villages of (1823), I 406

governor of, reprimanded for accusing Jews falsely, II 87

governor of, decrees "polite manners" for Jews, II 333

governor of, censures Jews of Homel, III 89

Localities in:

Dubrovna, I 252

Homel, III 87 ff

Ladi, I 239, II 117

Lozno, I 234, II 117

Lubavichi, II 117

Monostyrchina, II 86

Mstislavl, II 85 ff, 383

Moghilev, on the Dniester (Podolia), I 98

- Mohammedans**, king of Khazars
invites representative of, I
21
destroy Synagogue and are
punished by Khazar king, I
22
protected by Khazars against
Russians, I 26
persecuted in Russia, I 254
excluded from Russian bar, II
252 f
- Mohilever**, Samuel, rabbi of
Bialystok, joins "Love of
Zion" movement, II 376 f
- Moldavo-Wallachia**, Jews export
goods from Poland to, I 67 f
- Moldavia**, Lithuanian Jews ac-
cused of sending proselytes
to, I 81
- Moment**, Yiddish daily in War-
saw, III 162
- Monastyrchina** (government of
Moghilev), Itzele of, pleads
for Jews, II 86
- Montagu**, Sir Samuel, of London,
expelled from Moscow, II
345
- Montefiore** Sir Moses, corre-
sponds with Max Lilienthal,
II 67
visits Russia and pleads for
Jews, II 68
fund in honor of, established
by "Lovers of Zion," II 376
- Moravia**, Jacob Frank moves to,
I 219
Kremsier, city in, II 179
- Moravski**, Polish Minister of
War, objects to Jewish vol-
unteers, II 105
- Mordecai (Motele)**, of Chernohyl,
hasidic leader, II 119
- Mordvinov**, member of Council
of State, saves Jews of
Velizh from ritual murder
charge, II 81 f
- Merenu**, title of ordained rabbi,
I 117
- Moscow**, Principality (Tzar-
dom) of [Muscovy], growth
of, I 29
Jews of Tauris brought into
contract with, I 33
Crimean Jews render services
to rulers of, I 35 f
closed to Jews, I 60, 242
Little Russia incorporated in
(1654), I 94, 153; (1657),
I 159
Jews barred from (1610), I
244
rulers of Muscovy invade Po-
lish provinces, I 153 f, 244;
and troops of, expel or
massacre Jews, I 154, 243,
245 f
See Moscow (city)
- Moscow (city)**, "Judaizing
heresy" spreads in, I 36 f
Jewish court-physician burned
in, 37
Jewish merchants from Poland
and Lithuania penetrate in-
to, I 242 f

- Ivan the Terrible refuses to admit Jews to (1550), I 243
 influx of Poles and Jews into, I 244
 Polish-Jewish prisoners of war permitted to stay in, I 245
 Jewish cloth merchants permitted to visit, I 245
 Jews barred from (1676), I 245
 Borukh Leibov pays visit to, I 251; and converts Voznitsin to Judaism, I 251 f
 Jewish merchants of White Russia pay visits to, I 315
 Russian merchants of, protest against admission of Jews, I 315
 Jewish merchants excluded from (1790, 1791), I 316
 Jewish merchants permitted temporary sojourn in (1835), II 40
 Jewish physicians, though admitted to Interior, excluded from, II 167
 burgomaster of, objects to admission of Jews to city government, II 199
 Jews expelled from (under Ignatyev), II 264, 319
 Russian merchants plead for admission of Jews to, II 319
 Sir Samuel Montagu, of London, expelled from, II 345
 admission of Jews to schools and university of, restricted to 3% (1887), II 350; restriction placed on statute books (1908), III 157 f
 Jews harassed in, II 385, 397
 Russian celebrities of, sign protest against Jewish persecution, II 387
 Dolgoruki, governor-general of, lenient towards Jews, II 401
 Grand Duke Sergius appointed governor-general of, II 400
 Alexeyov, burgomaster, of, agitates against Jews, II 400 f
 Istomin, agent of Polyedonostzev, appointed to important post in, II 401
 ukase, expelling Jews from city and government of, decreed (March 28, 1891), II 402; wording of ukase affected by hope for foreign loan, II 408
 "illegal" Jews raided and imprisoned, II 403
 Alexander III. pays visit to, II 404
 discharged Jewish soldiers forbidden to remain in, II 404
 Jewish artisans and tradesmen expelled from, II 404 f
 horrors of expulsion from, II 405 f
 news of expulsion from, suppressed in Russian press, II 407; reported in foreign press, II 407

- expulsion from, witnessed by United States commissioners, II 407; causes protest of President Harrison of United States, II 408 f
- expulsion from, affects unfavorably Russian loan in Paris, II 408
- M. refugees deported from St. Petersburg, II 410
- expulsion of Jews from, continued, II 413; causes emigration to Western Europe and America, II 410, 413, 420
- visited by White, representative of Baron Hirsch, II 418
- synagogue of, closed (1892), II 423
- Minor, rabbi of M., and Schneider expelled from, II 423 f
- conversion of synagogue of, into charitable institution ordered by Alexander III., II 424
- "Marranos" in, II 425
- request of Jews of, to open synagogue for Coronation services, refused, II 112
- complete fashioning of synagogue of, ordered (1897), III 13 f
- Jewish merchants left in, persecuted and expelled, III 14 f
- new settlement of Jewish merchants in, prohibited (1899), III 15
- International Congress of Medicine held in, III 15
- Jewish community of, signs petition for equal rights, III 109
- Grand Duke Sergius, governor-general of, assassinated, III 110
- Russian laborers from, assist in Zhitomir pogrom, III 115
- armed uprising in (December, 1905), III 131
- Troitza monastery, in vicinity of, II 203
- Minor, rabbi of, II 203, 423 f
- Polyedonostzev, professor at University of, III 245
- Russ*, newspaper in, deprecates sympathy with pogrom victims, II 278
- headquarters of People's Freedom, revolutionary party, II 279 f
- Moscow News* criticises *Imperial Messenger* for connivance at pogroms, II 279
- Bogolyepov, professor in, anti-Jewish minister of Public Instruction, III 27 f
- Mitroplit*, head of Russian Church, resides in, III 125
- Moser, see Mesirah
- Moses, king of Khazars, I 26
- Moses, of Kiev, early Jewish scholar, corresponds with Gaon in Bagdad, I 133

- Moses**, rabbi of Great Poland, confirmed in office by Polish king (1518), I 104
- Moses Ben Abraham**, rabbi, author of Polish pamphlet defending Jews, II 98
- Moskal**, nickname for Russians among Poles, III 36
- Motele**, see Mordecai
- Moyetzki**, Polish priest, anti-Jewish writer, I 96
- Moyshe (Moses)**, Jewish martyr in Zaslav, I 177
- Mstislavl** (government of Moghilev), anti-Jewish riot at, stopped by Peter the Great, I 248
- Jews of, accused of mutiny (1844), II 85 ff
- Jews of, threatened with public whipping, II 383
- Munich** (Bavaria), Max Lilienthal born in, II 52
- Municipalities** (Magistracies), autonomy of Polish M. guaranteed by Magdeburg Law, I 44
- subject Jews to economic restrictions, I 70, 74 f
- of several cities combine against Jews, I 75
- form compacts with Kahals, I 84 f
- obtain right of excluding Jews, I 85
- arrogate jurisdiction over Jews, I 93 f
- Jews engaged in litigations with, I 171
- Jews placed under control of (1768), I 267
- Russian Government regulates relation of Jews to (1785 ff), I 308 ff
- Jewish merchants of White Russia admitted as members of (1783), I 310, 367 f
- Jews complain against oppression of, I 311 f
- hostility of Christian burghers bars Jews from, I 320, 369 ff
- Jewish membership in, restricted to one-third, I 368; (1836), II 41; (1870), II 199, 425
- Jews of Lithuania declared eligible to (1802), I 369
- Jews of Lithuania barred from (1805), II 41
- participation of Jews in, discussed by special Government Committee, II 198 f
- Jews of Pereyaslav invited to resign from, II 266
- Jews take conspicuous part in, II 425
- Jews deprived of votes in (1892), II 425 f
- local authorities ordered to appoint Jewish members, II 426
- League for Equal Rights calls on Jewish appointees in, to resign (1905), III 112

- Jewish Government appointees resign, III 113
 combined deputation of Zemstvos and M. favors universal suffrage, III 122
 See Kahals and Zemstvos
- Muravyov**, Minister of Justice, misrepresents facts of Homel pogrom, III 101
- Muravyov, Michael**, governor-general of Vilna, subdues Poles, II 183
 appointed military dictator of six governments, II 188
 pursues policy of Russification, II 188, 239
- Muravyov, Nikita**, leader of "Northern" revolutionaries, I 410
 limits political rights of Jews to Pale, I 413
- Musar** (Ethical Literature), name explained, I 201
 flourishes in Poland, I 201 f
- Muscovy**, see Moscow, principality of
- Mysticism**, see Cabala
- Nagatava**, agricultural Jewish colony, pogrom at, III 35
- Nahman**, of Belzhytz, see Jacob of Belzhytz
- Nahman**, of Bratzlav, hasidic leader, I 382
 makes pilgrimage to Palestine, I 383
 deprecates rationalism, I 383
 dies at Uman, I 383
 grave of, visited annually by devotees, II 122
 adherents of, persecuted by other Hasidim, II 122
- Nahman**, of Horodno, disciple of Besht, I 227
- Nahman**, of Kosovo, disciple of Besht, I 227
- Nahum**, see Nohum
- Names**, Jews of St. Petersburg ordered to use mutilated first N. (1890), II 397 f
 Jews prohibited from using Russian first N. (1893), II 427
- Naphtali**, of Minsk, Hebrew author, I 201
- Napoleon**, creates duchy of Warsaw, I 297 f
 "Code of N." introduced into duchy of Warsaw, I 298
 "suspensory decree" of (1808), duplicated in duchy of Warsaw, I 299
 announces to Jews of Europe convocation of "Great Synhedrion," I 346
 marches towards Russia (1806), I 347
 influence of, over Jews feared by Russian Government, I 347
 presented by Russian authorities to Jews as enemy of Judaism, I 348

- denounced by Holy Synod as
 "savior" of Jews, I 348 f
 wins friendship of Alexander
 I., I 350 f
 invades Russia (1812); I 354
 meets with sympathy of Poles,
 I 355
 Russian Jews prejudiced
 against, I 356 f
 marches through Palestine, I
 383
- Narodnaya Vola** ("The People's
 Freedom"), revolutionary
 party, II 279; see Revolution
 tion
- Narodnichestov** ("Populism"),
 II 222; see Revolution
- Narol** (Volhynia), massacre at
 (1648), I 149
- Naryshkin**, Russian dignitary,
 opposes Jewish suffrage,
 III 122
- Nathan**, successor of Nahman of
 Bratzlav, II 122
- Nationalism, Jewish**, preached
 by Smolenskin, II 233 ff
 growth of, in Russia, II 372
 rise of, III 40 ff
- National-cultural Autonomism**
 (spiritual nationalism), II
 327, 332, III 41, 51 ff, 144
 effect of, on Jewish Labor
 Movement, III 57
 national emancipation (and
 self-determination) demand-
 ed by League for Equal
 Rights, III 112, 133
- calling of Russian-Jewish Na-
 tional Assembly decided
 upon by League, III 133
 national-cultural Jewish insti-
 tutions prohibited and sup-
 pressed, III 160 f
 strength of, III 163
- Nationalist Society**, organization
 of Russian Black Hundred,
 III 114
- Neidhart**, city-governor of
 Odessa, assists pogrom, III
 129
- Nekhludov**, member of Commit-
 tee for Amelioration of Jews,
 favors emancipation of Jews,
 II 196 ff
- Nemirov**, see Niemirow
- Neo-Nebraic Literature**, see He-
 brew
- Nesselrode**, Russian Minister of
 Foreign Affairs, forwards
 memorandum on Jews to
 Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle,
 I 398
 discusses plan of settling Rus-
 sian Jews in Algiers, II 69
- Nestor**, Russian chronicler, re-
 fers to Jews, I 31
- Nesvizh** (government of Minsk),
 Solomon Maimon born in
 vicinity of, I 239
- Simeon Volfovich**, opponent of
 Vilna Kahal, imprisoned in,
 I 276
- Eliezer Dillon**, Jewish deputy,
 native of, I 358

- Netter, Charles**, sent by *Alliance Israélite* to help emigrants in Brody, II 269
- Neue Freie Presse**, Vienna daily, Dr. Herzl acts as correspondent of, in Paris, III 42
- Neuman**, rabbi in St. Petersburg, member of Executive Committee of Society for Diffusion of Enlightenment, II 214
- Nevel**, Jews, driven from villages, huddled together in, I 407
- New Israel**, Jewish sect in Odessa, II 334 f
- New Jersey**, Jewish agricultural colonies in, II 374
- New Russia**, see Russia, New
- New York**, Max Lilienthal accepts post as rabbi in, II 59
- Joseph Jacobs settles in, II 287
- Cox, Congressman from, addresses Congress on persecutions in Russia, III 284 f
- protest meeting against pogroms held in, II 296 f
- Jewish emigrants settle in, II 374
- Shalom Aleichem dies in, III 62
- place of publication, II 290, 297
- Nicholas I.**, emperor of Russia (1825-1855), II 13-153
- policy of, foreshadowed by Alexander I., I 390
- character of reign of, I 391, II 13, 140 f
- era of, depicted by Mendele Mokher Sforim, III 61
- coronation of, celebrated by Hebrew poet, II 135
- ascends throne through resignation of brother, II 13
- suppresses uprising of Decembrists, I 410, II 13
- characterizes Jews as "leeches," II 14
- plans to de-Judaize Jews through military conscription, II 15 f
- signs Conscription Ukase (August 26, 1827), II 17
- decrees expulsions of Jews, II 30 ff
- rejects plea for postponement of expulsion, II 33
- rejects recommendations of Council of State in favor of Jews, II 35 ff
- signs "Statute concerning Jews" (1835), II 39
- sentences Jews with expired passports to penal service, II 42
- subjects Hebrew books to censorship (1836), II 42 ff
- dissolves "Society of Israelitish Christians," I 400
- interested in conversion of Jews, II 44 f

appoints Committee for Radical Transformation of Jews (1840), II 49
 places Jewish schools under Government supervision (1842), II 56
 orders opening of Government schools for Jews (1844), II 57 f
 expels Jews from 51-verst zone (1843), II 62
 approached on behalf of Jews during stay in England, II 63
 German Jews plan gift to, II 67
 receives Moses Montefiore, II 68
 prohibits Jews from leaving Pale, II 70
 interested in spreading agriculture among Jews, II 71 f, 197, III 24
 closes synagogues in Velizh on ritual murder charge (1826), II 78
 believes ritual murder accusation, II 78 f
 warns Commission of Inquiry, at Velizh, against exaggerations, II 80
 sanctions acquittal of Velizh Jews (1835), II 82
 reiterates belief in ritual murder, II 83
 inflicts severe punishment on Jews of Mstislavl, II 86

departs Jewish printers to Siberia, 123
 orders "assortment" of Jews (1851), II 142 f
 prohibits Jewish dress (1851), II 144 f
 issues draconian conscription measures (1850), II 147; (1853), 148 f
 appoints committee to investigate blood accusation (1854), II 151, 203
 eclipsed by Alexander III., II 354
 See "Nicholas Soldiers"
 Nicholas II., emperor of Russia (1894-1917), III 7-169
 reign of, characterized, III 7
 ascends throne, III 7
 pledges himself to uphold autocracy, III 8
 thanks Jews for address of welcome, III 8
 surrounds himself with reactionaries, III 9
 influenced by Pobyedonostzev, III 9 f
 objects to abrogation of Pale, III 11
 Jews of Moscow restrained from celebrating coronation of, III 12
 economic collapse of Russian Jewry during reign of, III 22 ff
 Jews barred from liquor trade, III 22

- calls Hague Conference, III 35
 disappoints hopes of liberals, III 66
 appoints Plehve, III 67
 hatred of, toward Jews, intensified by Kishinev massacre, III 93
 grants trifling privileges to Jews on birth of heir-apparent, III 99
 makes partial concession to revolution (1904), III 106
 orders shooting of demonstrators (January, 1905), III, 106 f
 forced to make further concessions (February 18, 1905), III 110
 patronizes Black Hundred, III 113 f
 receives deputation of Zemstvos and municipalities, III 122
 defers consideration of Jewish question, III 123
 abets counter-revolutionary pogroms (October, 1905), III 127
 pursues double-faced policy, III 130
 receives deputation of Black Hundred, III 131
 dissolves First Duma, III 135, 139
 objects to mitigation of Jewish disabilities, III 141
 changes electoral law, III 142
 expresses confidence in Black Hundred, III 149
 pardons pogrom perpetrators, III 150
 wears ostentatiously badge of Black Hundred, III 151
 ratifies restrictive school norm of 1887 (1908), III 157
 extends school norm to Jewish "externs" (1911), III 159
 witnesses assassination of Stolypin at Kiev, III 164
 checks pogrom at Kiev, and stirs up Beilis case, III 165
 "Nicholas Soldiers," term explained, II 29
 forbidden to live outside Pale, II 29
 permitted to live outside Pale (1867), II 29, 172
 Nicholayev (government of Kherson), Jews expelled from (1829), II 32 f
 excluded from Pale and closed to Jews (1835), II 4
 included in Pale by Alexander II., II 172
 pogrom at (April 19, 1899), III 34 ; (October, 1905), III 128
 Jewish community of, protests against denial of Jewish franchise, III 128
 Niemen, river, Lithuanians settled on banks of, I 59
 part of Jewish Pale, I 317

- Niemirov** (Podolia), Khmel-nitzki massacre at (1648), I 146 f
pogrom at, commemorated annually, I 152
Jacob Joseph Cohen, rabbi of, I 227, 230
name of, used as substitute for Kishinev, III 79
- Nietzscheanism**, preached by Hebrew writer, III 60
- Nikitin**, Russian-Jewish writer, quoted, I 315
- Nisselovich**, Jewish deputy to Third Duma, III 153
collects signatures for abrogation of Pale, III 156
- Nissi**, king of Khazars, I 26
- Nizhni-Novgorod**, Jews permitted to visit fair of (1835), II 40
pogrom at (1884), II 360 f
- Nobility**, in Poland, see Shlakhta
- Nohum**, of Chernobyl, hasidic preacher and leader, I 232, 382; II 119
- Nordau**, Max, Zionist discourses of, discussed in Russia, III 47
denies future of diaspora, III 52
- Norov**, Minister of Public Instruction, suggests admission into Russian Interior of Jewish graduates of Russian schools (1857), II 163
- North-West** (Lithuania and White Russia), rabbinism of, contrasted with Hasidism of South-west (Ukraine and Poland), I 199, 221, 274
Hasidism weak in, I 371 f; and different from Hasidism of South-west, I 233 ff
Kahals in, stronger than in South-west, I 274, 379
- Notkin**, see Shklover
- Novaya Ushitza** (Podolia), Jews of, accused of collective crime, II 84 f
Israel of Ruzhin implicated in case against Jews of, II 121
- Novgorod**, Jews of Kiev emigrate to, I 36 f
Jews of Vitebsk exiled by Russians to (1654), I 154
- Novgorod-Seversk**, former name of government of Poltava, I 321
included in Pale (1794), I 317
- Novo-Moskovsk** (government of Yekaterinoslav), pogrom at (1883), II 360
- Novoshelski**, burgomaster of Odessa, favors admission of Jews to municipal government, II 199
- Novosiltzev**, Nicholas, Russian Commissary in Poland, II 16
warns against imposing conscription on Jews, II 16 f

- proposes plan of reorganization of Polish Jews, II 92 f
- plan of, discussed and rejected by Polish Council of State, II 93 f
- Novosti** ("The News"), liberal paper in St. Petersburg, II 379
- suppressed for expressing sympathy with Moscow exiles, II 407
- Novoye Vremya** ("The New Time"), St. Petersburg daily, adopts anti-Semitic policy, II 205
- becomes organ of reaction, II 247
- advocates repression of Jews, II 278, 381
- commends pogrom at Warsaw, II 282
- exerts anti-Jewish influence on Government circles, II 380
- read by Alexander III., II 380
- attacks Rothschild of Paris, II 410
- utilizes Dreyfus Affair for attack upon Jews, III 32
- report of Shpola pogrom in, quoted, III 33
- Suvorin, publisher of, produces anti-Semitic play, II 38
- libels Jews in Russo-Japanese war, III 95
- Nyeshava** (*Polish*, Nieszawa), Diet of, adopts anti-Jewish "Statute" (1454), I 63
- "Statute" of, confirmed by Piotrkov Diet (1496), I 64
- Nyevakhovich, Judah Leib** (Lev), author of Russian pamphlet on Jewish question, I 386 f
- becomes Russian playwright, I 388
- embraces Christianity, I 388
- descendants of, occupy prominent Government positions, I 388
- Nyezhin** (government of Chernigov), pogrom at (1881), II 267; October, 1905), III 129
- Obadiah**, king of Khazars, I 26
- invites Jewish sages from Babylonia, I 21
- Oblavas**, or raids, on Jews of Moscow, II 403
- on Jews of Kiev, III 20
- Obolanin**, procurator-general of Senate, gives anti-Jewish instructions to Dyerzhavin, I 229
- Obolenski**, member of Council of State, favors Jewish franchise, III 122
- Octobrists**, conservative Russian party, name explained, III 153
- demand exclusion of Jews from office of Justice of Peace, I 156
- Odessa**, Jewish families in, converted to Christianity, I 400

- Jewish model school in, II 52, 133, 137
 Lilienthal kindly received by Jews of, II 56
 Bezalel Stern, resident of, appointed on Rabbinical Commission, II 57
 center of Haskalah, II 132 f
 pogrom at (1871), II 191 ff, 215 f; effects of, II 216, 239
 burgomaster of, advocates admission of Jews to municipal government, II 199
 Pirogov, school superintendent of, encourages Jewish cultural aspirations, II 207, 209
 branch of Society for Diffusion of Enlightenment established in, II 215 f; discontinued as result of pogrom, II 216
ha-Melitz, published in, II 217
 Jewish periodicals in Russian published in, II 219
 Smolenskin removes to, II 234
 Lilienblum settles in, II 237
 Osip Rabinovich, founder of Russian-Jewish literature, resides in, II 238
 Government emissaries prepare pogrom in, II 248
 pogrom at (May, 1881), II 257 f
 Jewish students of, organize self-defence, II 258
 "New Israel," Judeo-Christian sect, founded in, I 334
 center of "Love of Zion" movement, II 376
 headquarters of Palestine Relief Society, II 422
 Jews of, warned by city-governor, II 383
 visited by White, representative of Baron Hirsch, II 418
 growth of pauperism among Jews of, III 24
 pupils of Jewish Agricultural School in vicinity of, barred from land ownership, III 25
 Order *Bne Moshe* founded by Ahad Ha'am in, III 49
ha-Shiloah edited in, III 58, 162
 Jews of, organize self-defence (1904), III 96
 Grigoryev, city-governor of, prevents pogrom, III 97; dismissed, III 151
 chief-of-police of, fired at by Jew, III 107
 Jewish community of, signs petition for equal rights, III 109
 Russian Nationalist Society of, incites to pogrom, III 114
 pogrom at (October, 1905), III 128 f
 Jewish self-defence of, sentenced by court-martial, III 150 f
 Jews of, assaulted by Black Hundred, III 151

- governor-general of, condemns Jews, II 276
- Gurko, governor-general of, suggests restrictive school norm, II 339
- governor of, recommends forbidding Jewish emigrants to return to Russia, II 414
- Odoyevski, Count, advises Catherine II. concerning admission of Jews into Russia, I 259
- Ofen, see Buda
- Offenbach (Germany), Jacob Frank settles in, I 220
- Olbia, on Black Sea, Jewish settlement in, I 14
- Old-Constantine (Staro-Constantine), see Constantinov
- "Old Testament Believers," term of assimilated Polish Jews, II 96, 100 ff
- Oleshnitzki, Zbignyev, archbishop of Cracow, denounces Casimir IV. for protecting Jews, I 62
- starts campaign against Jews, I 62 f
- dictates anti-Jewish "Statute" of Nyeshava, I 63
- Omsk, Territory of (Siberia), lands in, set aside for Jewish colonists, II 71
- Oppenheim, German-Jewish painter, stops painting ordered for Nicholas I., II 67
- Orlov (government), "Judaizers" in, I 402
- Orlov, Count, president of Council of State, urges punishment of Jews accused of ritual murder, II 162
- Orsha (government of Moghilev), pogrom at, III 128
- Orshanski, Ilya (Elias), Russian-Jewish writer, II 238 f
- Orshanski, Dr., brother of former, reports interview with Ignatyev, II 284 f, 297
- Oryol (city), Jews expelled from, II 264
- anti-Semitic play produced at, III 38 f
- Ostrog (Volhynia), Jewish community of, represented on Council of Four Lands, I 110
- Cossack massacre at (1648), I 149
- bombarded by Russian army (1792), I 292
- Jewish conference at (1798), I 324
- Rabbis of:
- Solomon Luria (*Reshal*), I 125
- Samuel Edels (*Maharsho*), I 129
- David Halevi (*Taz*), I 130
- Naphtali Cohen, I 204
- Ostropol, Samson of, Cabalist and martyr, I 148 f

- Ostropoler, Hershel**, "court-fool" of Tzaddik Borukh Tulchinski, I 348
- Ostrov**, at extreme end of Jewish Pale, II 70
- Ostrovski, Anton**, commander of National Guard in Warsaw, II 106
defends Jews, II 107
- Ottocar**, of Bohemia, Jewish charter of, serves as model for Boleslav of Kalish, I 45
- Otyechstvennyia Zapiski** ("Records of the Fatherland"), radical Russian magazine, records Jewish question as economic problem, II 325
quoted, II 325
- Oxman**, Jewish informer, II 84
- Padua**, Polish Jews study medicine at University of, I 105, 132
- Pahlen**, Count, chairman of "Pahlen Commission," II 336 f
- Pahlen**, governor of Vilna, suggests removal of Jewish disabilities, III 93
- Pale of Settlement** (Russian, *cherta osyedlosti*), foreshadowed in decree of May 7, 1786, restricting Jews to annexed White Russia, I 314 f
enlarged as result of second partition of Poland (1793), I 316 f
- formally sanctioned by Law of June 23, 1794, I 317
enlarged as result of third partition of Poland (1795), I 317 f
- Courland added to (1795), I 321
defined in Statute of 1804, I 342
Kiev excluded from (1827), II 31 ff
Courland [and Livonia] excluded from (1829), II 32
Sevastopol and Nicholayev excluded from (1829), II 32
accurately defined in Statute of 1805, II 39 f
Nicholas I. watches over strict maintenance of, II 70
number of Jews and Jewish artisans in, II 168
Commission for Amelioration of Jews considers thinning out of (1871), II 193
gubernatorial commission appointed for every government of (1881), II 273
Ignatyev refuses to add to, II 285, 306
Rostov and Taganrog excluded from (1887), II 346
admission of Jews to schools in, restricted to 10% (1887), II 350; restriction placed on Statute books (1908-1909), III 157 f
admission of Jews to universities in, restricted to 7%, III 29

disproportionately large number of Jewish recruits in, II 355 f
 congestion in cities of, II 385
 Jews in, compared with prisoner in cell, II 389
 Moscow refugees driven into, II 406
 visited by United States commissioners, II 407
 visited by Arnold White, emissary of Baron Hirsch, II 417
 Yalta excluded from (1893), II 428 f
 governor of Vilna recommends abrogation of, III 11
 zealously maintained under Nicholas II., III 16, 20 f
 growth of pauperism in, III 23 f
 localities in, barred to Jews in 1882, reopened to them (1903), III 80 f
 preservation of, affirmed by Third Duma (1908), III 154
 one hundred and six Duma deputies favor abrogation (1910), III 156
 exclusion of Jews from villages in, see Villages
 See also Interior, and Residence, Right of
 Palestine, Teutonic Order originates in, I 63
 Cabalists of, influence Polish Jewry, I 134
 Sabbatian propaganda carried on in, II 205

mass emigration of Polish Jews to (1700), I 209 f
 Shneur Zalman accused of collecting money for, I 376
 Nahman of Bratzlav makes pilgrimage to, I 383
 Lelevel, Polish historian, promises Polish help in restoration of, II 108
 restoration of Jews to, preached by Smolenskin, II 236; advocated by Levanda, II 240
Bilu pioneers emigrate to (1882), II 321 f
 beginnings of Jewish colonization in, II 322
 "Lovers of Zion" establish colonies, in, III 42
 Jewish national center in, championed by Lilienblum, II 328 ff; and, as an alternative, by Pinsker, II 331
 expulsion from Moscow stimulates emigration to, II 416
 attempt at mass emigration to (1891), II 421 f
 feeble results of colonization in, III 42
 colonization of, made part of Basle program, III 44
 modern Hebrew writers in, III 163
 See also Zionism
Palestinophilstvo, Russian name for "Love of Zion," II 328; see also Zionism

- Pan**, noble landowner in Poland, name explained, I 93
- Panticapaeum**, see Kerch
- Pardes**, Hebrew annual, III 58
- Paris**, Sanchez, Jewish court-physician in St. Petersburg, removes to, I 258
- Berek Yoselovich pays visit to, I 294
- "Jewish Parliament" meets in, I 346 ff; III 53
- Rothschilds of, II 69, 375, 407, 410
- Lelevel, Polish historian, refugee in, II 107
- Polish refugees in, II 108
- anti-Semitism among Polish refugees in, II 109
- Alliance Israélite Universelle* in, II 189, 194, 297, 322
- Plehve's secret circular made known in, II 381
- Moscow refugees arrive in, II 408
- Jewish Colonization Association in, sends deputation to Pobyedonostzev, III 10
- Herzl resides in, III 42
- Paskevich**, Russian viceroy in Poland, pacifies Poland (after 1831), II 109
- Moses Montefiore communicates with, II 68
- Altaras of Marseilles negotiates with, II 69
- Passek**, governor-general of White Russia, questioned by Senate concerning Jewish law courts, I 310
- restricts Jews of White Russia in economic pursuits, I 310 f
- Passover**, Christian, see Easter
- Passover**, lawyer, member of Jewish deputation to Alexander III., II 261
- Passports**, Jews with expired P's. severely punished, II 42
- Jews found without P's. sent into army, II 148 f
- Jewish P's. examined in St. Petersburg, II 343
- Jewish emigrants relieved from tax on, II 418
- disabilities imposed by P. Regulations of 1894, II 427
- Paul IV.**, pope, encourages anti-Jewish policy in Poland, I 86
- Paul I.**, emperor of Russia (1796-1801), I 321-334
- includes Courland in area of Jewish settlement, I 321
- imposes restrictions on Jews of government of Minsk, I 323
- Jews of Volhynia prepare to send deputation to, I 324 f
- dispatches Dyerzhavin to White Russia, I 328 f
- releases Shneur Zalman from prison, I 376
- receives denunciation against Hasidim, I 378

- Arakecheyev prominent in military affairs during reign of, I 395
- Pavlovsk, District of (government of Voroneyezsh), "Judaizing" sect spreads in, I 401
- Pavluk, Cossack leader, instigates attacks upon Jews, I 144
- Pavlochi (province of Kiev), Jews of, accused of ritual murder, I 178
- Pecheneges succeed Khazars in Crimea, I 29
- Pechera Monastery, in Kiev, Abbot of, preaches hatred toward Jews, I 31
- "People's Freedom" (in Russian, Narodnaya Vola), revolutionary party, responsible for assassination of Alexander II., II 279
pursues anti-Jewish policy, II 279 f
- Perekop, gulf and isthmus of, I 13, 29
- Peretz, rabbi of Bohemian Community in Cracow, I 104
- Peretz, Abraham, of St. Petersburg, assists Jewish deputies, I 338
acts as Jewish Maecenas, I 386
converted to Christianity, I 388
- Peretz, Gregory, son of former, Russian revolutionary, I 412
- Pereyaslav (province, or government of Poltava), Cossack massacre at (1648), I 145
pogrom at (1881), II 265 f
- Perez, I. L., editor of Yiddish magazine, III 59
Yiddish and Hebrew writer, III 61 f, 162
- Perl, Joseph, Hebrew writer in Galicia, II 126 f
- Perm (Central Russia), Jewish cantonists driven to, II 25
- Perovksi, Russian statesman, considers emigration of Russian Jews to Algiers, II 69
- Persia, Khazars make inroads into, I 19
Jewish merchants travel through, I 23
- Pestel, Paul, leader of early Russian revolutionaries, I 410
discusses Jewish problem, I 410 ff
favors establishment of separate Jewish Commonwealth, I 412
- Peter, Carmelite monk in Lublin, alleged victim of ritual murder, I 100
- Peter I., The Great, emperor of Russia (1688-1725), extends influence of Russia over Poland
refuses to admit Jews into Russia, I 246 f
prejudiced against Jews, I 247 f

- stops military riot against Jews, I 248
- admits Jewish financiers to St. Petersburg, I 248
- quoted in favor of barring Jews from Russia, II 35 f
- originator of penalty by *Spiessruten*, II 85
- Peter II.**, emperor of Russia (1727-1730), permits Jews to visit fairs in Little Russia, I 250
- Peter III.**, emperor of Russia (1761), dethroned by Catherine II., I 259
- Peterhof**, near St. Petersburg, Plehve killed on way to, III 97
- Jewish franchise discussed at conferences in, III 122
- Petersburg**, see St. Petersburg
- Pethahiah**, of Ratisbon, Jewish traveller, I 29
- refers to Russia, I 32 f
- Petrograd**, Greco-Jewish inscription kept in Hermitage at, I 15
- Russian *Mitropolit* resides at, II 125; see St. Petersburg
- Pfefferkorn**, Jewish convert, II 189
- Phanagoria** (Taman Peninsula), Jews settled in, I 14, 18
- Philadelphia**, Marcus Jastrow accepts post of rabbi in, II 179
- place of publication, III 51
- Philippson**, Ludwig, founder of *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums*, II 67
- corresponds with Max Lilienthal, II 67
- serves as model for Russian-Jewish publicists, II 219
- Philipson, David**, quoted, I 54
- Philosophy, Jewish**, studied in Poland, I 132 f
- opposed by Joel Sirkis, I 133
- reflected in doctrine of Besht, I 225 f
- imbedded in doctrine of Shneur Zalman, I 374, 382
- opposed by Rabbinism, I 381
- regarded as destructive by Nahman of Bratzlav, I 383
- Phineas**, of Koretz, disciple of Besht, I 227
- descendants of, II 123
- Photius**, Patriarch of Constantinople, hopes for conversion of Crimean Jews, I 18
- Physicians, Jewish**, in Poland, attacked by Christian physician, I 96
- originally natives of Spain or Italy, I 131 f
- study at University of Padua, I 105, 132
- at Polish court, I 132, 136
- at Russian court, I 258
- in White Russia, I 331, 386
- admitted to residence in Russian Interior and to civil service (1861), II 165, 167
- excluded from civil service, III 27

- Physicians, Jewish, in Russian army:**
 number of, restricted, II 319 f
 first to be mobilized in Russo-Japanese war, III 94 f
 families of mobilized P. expelled, III 95
 accused of revolutionary propaganda, III 156
- Piast, progenitor of Piast dynasty in Poland, I 40**
- Piatoli, secretary of Polish king, assists Jews, I 291**
- Pidyon, contribution of Hasidim, term explained, II 119**
- Pikolski, monk at Lemberg, conducts agitation against Jews, I 174**
- Pilpul, method of talmudic dialectics, fostered in Poland, I 119 f**
 carried from Bohemia to Poland, I 122
 opposed by Solomon Luria, I 256
 grafted upon by Cabala, I 135, II 117
 shunned by Elijah of Vilna, I 236
- Pinkasevich, Jacob, Jewish martyr in Posen, I 175**
- Pinsk, important community in Lithuania, I 73**
 Jewish community of, represented in Lithuanian *Waad*, I 112
 Avigdor, rabbi of, I 377 f
- Pinsker, Leon, editor of *Sion*, II 220**
 author of *Autoemancipation*, II 330 f
 ideas of, affect "Love of Zion" movement, II 332
 becomes its leader, II 376, III 42, 49
 elected president of Society for Granting Relief in Syria and Palestine, II 422
 contrasted with Herzl, III 43
- Pinsker, Simha, father of former, teacher in Odessa school, II 133**
- Piotrkov, Diet of (1496), confirms anti-Jewish Statute, I 64; restricts commercial rights of Lemberg Jews (1521), I 75**
- Sigismund II. confirms liberal Jewish Statute at Diet of (1548), I 83**
- Church Synod of, passes anti-Jewish "Constitution" (1542), I 82 f**
- Crown Tribunal of, tries ritual murder cases, I 95 f; and Jews accused of blasphemy, I 164 f**
- Jewish communities in province of, destroyed, I 156**
- Tobias Feder, Hebrew writer, native of, I 388**
- Pirhe Tzafon, Hebrew periodical in Vilna, II 136**

- Pirogov, Nicholas**, Odessa physician, friend of Jews, II 207, 209
- Piryatin** (province of Poltava), Cossack massacre at (1648), I 145
- Pisarevski**, instigator of Kishinev pogrom, commits suicide, III 91
- Pisaryev**, radical Russian writer, influences Russian-Jewish *intelligenzia*, II 209
influences M. L. Lilienblum, II 238
- Plehve**, Russian assistant-minister of Interior, II 379
chief of political police, II 381
objects to Jewish participation in Zemstvos, II 386
chairman of secret anti-Jewish Committee, II 399
suggests expulsion of Jews from Moscow, II 402
bars Jews from municipal government, II 425
appointed Minister of Interior, III 16, 67
plans to check revolution by pogroms, III 68 f
subventions Krushevan's anti-Semitic paper, III 70
sends telegram to stop Kishinev massacre, III 75, 97
stifles press protests against Kishinev massacre, III 77
suspected of sending orders encouraging massacre, III 77
- forbids Jewish self-defence, III 80, 90
forbids Zionism, III 82 f
negotiates with Herzl, III 83 f
plans regulating Jewish legislation, III 92 f
stops expulsion of families of mobilized Jews, III 95
assassinated, III 97
urges Russo-Japanese War as anti-revolutionary measure, III 98
death of, predicted in *Voskhod*, III 98
investigation of Homel pogrom started during lifetime of, III 101
- Plotzk** (*Polish*, Plock), city in Poland, I 243
city and province of, annexed by Prussia (1793), I 292
Synod of, passes anti-Jewish resolution (1733), I 171
archbishop of, endorses project of Jewish reforms, I 292
- Poale Zion**, see Zionism
- Pobyedonostzev, Constantine Petrovich**, professor at Moscow University, II 245
tutor of Alexander III., II 245
head of Holy Synod, II 245
defends autocratic régime, II 245
member of reactionary Sacred League, II 248
disparages popular education, II 348 f

inspires educational restrictions for Jews, II 349
 utilizes railroad accident at Borki for purposes of reaction, III 378
 opposes Jewish participation in Zemstvos, II 386
 endorses expulsion of Jews from Moscow, II 401
 receives gift for ecclesiastic schools from Baron Hirsch, II 415
 receives White, emissary of Baron Hirsch, II 417
 recommends him to officials, II 418
 condemns Jews as parasites, II 417
 bars Jews from municipal self-government, II 425
 all powerful under Nicholas II., III 9
 continues fight against Jews, III 9 f
 Podol, Jewish quarter in Kiev, pogrom in, II 252 ff
 Podolia, part of Red Russia, I 53
 subject to Poland, I 140
 uprising against Poles in (1648), I 145
 regained by Poland (1667), I 159
 annexed by Turkey (1672), I 208
 returned to Poland (1699), I 208

strip of, annexed by Austria (1772), I 187
 annexed by Russia (1793), I 292
 included in Pale (1794), I 317; (1804), I 342; (1835), II 39
 Jews prohibited from selling cloth in, I 75
 Jews massacred by Cossacks in (1648), I 146 ff, 157
 part of, forbidden to Jews (1649), I 151
 Jews massacred by haidamacks (1768), I 183 ff
 Talmudic culture deteriorates in, I 199
 Sabbatian movement propagated in, I 208, 210 f
 Jacob Frank active in, I 211, 212 f, 216
 rabbis of, summoned to disputation with Frankists, I 214 f
 difference of intellectual development in, I 221
 Besht, founder of Hasidism, active in, I 222, 224 f, 228
 Hasidism spreads in, I 229, 274
 type of Tzaddik in, I 233
 conquered by Hasidim, I 371, 383
 Kahal of, appealed to by Vilna Gaon against Hasidism, I 373
 remains hotbed of Hasidism, II 121 f

- Jews of, suffer from civil war in Poland (1792), I 292
 Shlakhta of, suggests anti-Jewish measures (1798), I 324
 Jews of, decide to appeal to Paul I., I 325
 Jews of, send delegate to St. Petersburg (1803), I 337
 Jews of, invited by Government to elect deputies (1807), I 349
 Jews of, protest against discrimination in municipal government, I 369
 Jews of, indifferent towards Polish insurrection (1831), II 107
 Jewish economic activity in, II 194
 pogroms in (1881), II 256; (1882), 299 ff, 304
 governor of, favors emigration of Jewish proletariat, II 414
 Localities in:
 Balta, II 299 ff
 Bratzlav, I 288, 383
 Kamenitz, I 215, 324
 Lantzkorona, I 213
 Moghilev (on the Dniester), I 98
 Satanov, I 213, 388
 Pogroms (under Polish régime), occasioned by Black Death, I 52
 at Cracow, I 56 f, 63 f, 97, 102, 161, 166
 at Lemberg, I 64
 at Posen, I 64, 75, 90, 95, 166
 at Brest-Kuyavsk, I 75
 at Brest-Litovsk, I 99
 at Vilna, I 94, 99
 at Warsaw (1790), I 285 ff
 occasioned by meetings of provincial diets, or dietines, I 170
 perpetrated by Polish irregular troops (1656), I 155 f
 suppressed by Sigismund I., I 76
 energetically opposed by Stephen Batory, I 90
 forestalled by Sigismund III., I 97
 prevented by Vladislav IV., I 98
 forbidden by diet of Warsaw (1717), I 171
 perpetrated by theological students (*Schülergelauf*), I 161
 student P's. forbidden by Mechislav III. (1173), I 42; and condemned by Polish diet, I 166 f
 Pogroms (in the Ukraina), under Pavluk, Cossack leader, (1637), I 144
 under Khmelnitzki, Cossack leader, (1648), I 145 ff
 by Haidamacks (1768), I 183 f
 at Uman, I 184 f

Pogroms (under Russian régime), term explained, II 191

perpetrated in Poland by invading Russians (1563), I 243; (1654), I 153 f, 245

checked by Peter the Great (1708), I 248

at Odessa (1871), II 191 ff; halts assimilation endeavors, 215 f; depicted by Smolenskin, II 245; produces staggering effect on Orshanski, II 239

initiation of policy of (1881), I 247

carefully prepared by Government agents, II 248

Katzaps, or Great Russians, imported for perpetration of, II 248, 256, 359, III 115

at Yelisavetgrad (April, 1881), II 249 ff

in district of Yelisavetgrad and government of Kherson, II 251

at Kiev (April, 1881), II 251 ff; effects of, minimized by Government press, II 255 f; tried in court, II 264 f

new P's. in South Russia, II 256 ff

averted at Berdychev by Jewish self-defence, II 256 f

at Odessa (May, 1881), II 257 f; Jewish self-defence punished, II 264

believed by peasants to have been ordered by Tzar, II 257 ascribed by Government to Russian revolutionary propaganda, II 259 f, 269, 279 later attributed by it to Jewish economic exploitation, II 261, 315

Government indifferent towards victims of, II 263 perpetrators of, receive slight sentences in court, II 264 outbreak of new P's. in South Russia (summer 1881), II 265 ff

suppressed in Lithuania and White Russia, II 267, 276 replaced there by incendiary activities, II 267

give rise to emigration movement, II 267 f

at Warsaw (December, 1881), II 280 ff; effect of, on Europe and America, II 283; London, II, 287; welcomed by Government "Jewish Committee," II 310

Alexander III. regrets necessity of suppressing. II 284

Jews hold public mourning for victims of, II 286

cause agitation in England, II 287 f

Mansion House Meeting in London protests against (February 1, 1882), II 288 ff

- committee to aid victims of, organized in London, II 290 f
- perpetrators of, arrested, II 291
- at Balta (March, 1882), II 299 ff; horrors of, II 302 f, terrifies Government, II 314; tried in court, II 315 f; produces emigration panic, II 321
- discussed by Jewish Conference in St. Petersburg, II 306 f
- justified in report of "Jewish Committee," II 309
- policy of, abandoned by Government, II 311 ff
- perpetrators of, receive severe sentences, II 315 f
- Russian press and literature react feebly on, II 325 f
- effect of, on Russian-Jewish *intelligenza*, II 326
- outbreak of new P's. in South Russia (1883), II 358 ff
- at Rostov (May, 1883), II 358; news of, suppressed, II 358
- at Yekaterinoslav (July, 1883), II 358 ff
- at Nizhni-Novgorod (1884), II 360 ff; prompted by greed and prospect of immunity, II 361
- referred to by Pahlen Commission, II 367
- at Starodub (government of Chernigov, 1891), 411 ff; displeases Government, II 412
- bred in public houses, III 23
- outbreak of new P's. in Russian South and South-west (1897), III 32 ff
- stopped by Government on account of Hague Conference, II 35
- at Chenstokhov (by Poles), stopped by Russian Government (1902), III 36
- planned by Plehve as counter-revolutionary measure, III 68 f
- at Kishinev (April, 1903), III 69 ff; see Kishinev
- at Homel (August, 1903), III 87 ff; tried in court and misrepresented by Government, III 101 ff
- impending P's. stopped by Government (1904), III 96 f
- in Russian South-west (August, 1904), III 99
- by mobilized soldiers (September, 1904), III 100
- at Moghilev (October, 1904), III 100 f; avenged by Jewish youth, III 107
- in government of Vitebsk (October, 1904), III 101
- organized by Black Hundred (April, 1905), III 113 ff

at Bialystok, III 114 f
 at Dusyaty (government of Kovno), III 115
 at Melitopol (government of Tavrida), III 115
 at Simferopol (government of Tavrida), III 115
 at Zhitomir (Volhynia), III 115 f; followed by tragedy at Troyanov, III 116 ff; misrepresented by Government, III 118
 intensify revolutionary movement among Jews, III 119
 perpetrated by soldiers (summer, 1905), III 119 f
 at Minsk, III 119
 at Brest-Litovsk, III 119
 at Syedletz, III 119
 at Lodz, III 119 f
 at Bialystok (June, 1905), III 120
 at Kerch (Crimea), July, 1905, III 120; prepared by Government, III 120
 "October P'a." (October 18-25, 1905), III 124 ff; organized by Black Hundred, with help of Tzar and police, III 125 f; vast extent of, III 128; followed by anarchy, III 130 f
 at Odessa, III 129; assisted by police, III 129
 at Nyezhin (government of Chernigov), III 129
 outside Pale (October, 1905), III 130

participation of Government in, denounced by assembled Russian Jews, III 132
 Jews threatened with, during elections to First Duma, III 135; to Third Duma, III 153
 discussed by First Duma, III 136 ff; and condemned in resolution (1906), III 139
 at Bialystok (June, 1906), III 136 f; investigated and reported upon by commission of First Duma, III 137
 perpetrators of October P. either untried or pardoned, III 150
 planned at Kiev but averted (September, 1911), III 165
 List of pogroms according to cities and governments:
 Alexandria (Kherson), III 100
 Ananyev (Kherson), II 251
 Balta (Podolia), II 299 ff
 Berdychev (Volhynia), II 256 f
 Bialystok, III, 114 f, 120, 136 f
 Borispol (Poltava), II 267
 Chenstokhov (Poland), III 36 f
 Chernigov (city), III 128
 Chernigov (government), II 257
 Dusyaty (Kovno), III 115
 Hornel (Moghilev), III 87 ff
 Kalarash, III 128

- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| Kamenetz (Podolia), III 128 | Pereyaslav (Poltava), II 265 |
| Kantakuzenka (Kherson), III 33 | Podolia (government), II 256, 304 |
| Karpovich (Chernigov), II 315 | Polotzk (Vitebsk), I 243 |
| Kerch (Tavrida), III 120 | Romny, III 128 |
| Kherson (government), II 304 | Rostov, II 358 |
| Kiev (city), I 32, II 251 ff, III 128, 165 | Rovno (Volhynia), III 99 |
| Kiev (government), II 256 | Saratov, III 130 |
| Kishinev, III 69 ff, 128 | Semyonovka (Chernigov), III 129 |
| Konotop (Chernigov), II 257 | Shpola (Kiev), III 33 |
| Lodz, III 119 f | Simferopol (Tavrida), III 115, 128 |
| Melitopol (Tavrida), III 115 | Smyela (Kiev), II 256; III 99 |
| Minsk, III 119 | Starodub (Chernigov), II 411 ff |
| Moghilev (city), I 153 f, 245; III 100 | Syedletz (Poland), III 119 |
| Moghilev (government), III 100 | Troyanov (Volhynia), III 116 ff |
| Mstislavl (Moghilev), I 248 | Vilna, I 154, 245 |
| Nagartava, Jewish agricultural colony, III 35 | Vitebsk (city), I 154, 245 |
| Nicholayev (Crimea), III 34 f, 128 | Vitebsk (government), III 101 |
| Nizhni-Novgorod, II 360 f | Volhynia (government), II 256 |
| Novo-Moskvosk (Yekaterinoslav), II 360 | Voronyezh, III 130 |
| Nyezhin (Chernigov), II 267, III 129 | Warsaw, II 280 ff |
| Odessa, II 191 ff, 257 f, III 128 f | Yekaterinoslav, II 359 f, III 128 |
| Orsha (Moghilev), III 128 | Yelisavetgrad, II 249 ff, III 128 |
| | Zhitomir (Volhynia), III 115 ff |
| | See also Self-Defence |

Poklonski, Russian colonel, massacres Jews of Moghilev, I 153 f

Pokutye (*Polish*, Pokucie), region in Poland, I 150

Polakov, Lazarus, Jewish financier in Moscow, II 400

Polakov, Samuel, Jewish financier in St. Petersburg, participates in Jewish Conference, II 304

discusses Jewish question with Ignatyev, II 305 f

Poland, first partition of (1772), I 262

condition of Jews in, after first partition, I 263 ff, 270

schemes for improving condition of Jews in, I 271 ff, 284

inner life of Jews in, I 274 ff

Hasidism spreads in, I 231 f

problem of Jews in, discussed in Polish literature, I 280 ff

Polish Diet appoints committee to consider Jewish question, I 287 f; postpones action, I 290

second partition of (1793), and revolution under Kosciuszko, I 292 f

patriotism of Jews in, I 292 ff

third partition of (1795), I 297

reconstituted by Napoleon as Duchy of Warsaw (1807), I 297

equality of all citizens proclaimed in, I 298

Government of, suspends emancipation of Jews (1808), I 299, II 100 f

Government of, passes anti-Jewish restrictions, I 300

assimilated Jews of, apply for equal rights, I 300 ff; and are refused, I 302

Jews of, released from military service (1812), I 304

Jews of, barred from liquor trade (1812), I 304, II 100

French influences among Jews of, I 385 f

growth of Hasidism in, I 384, II 122

Poles side with Napoleon in Franco-Russian War, I 355; and threaten to massacre Jews and Russians, I 357

reconstituted as "Kingdom of Poland," and assigned by Congress of Vienna to Russia [Russian Poland, or Congress Poland] (1815), I 390

granted complete autonomy by Alexander I., II 88

number of Jews in kingdom of, I 390

Government of, appoints Committee on Jewish Question (1815), II 89

- David Friedländer of Berlin submits memorandum on Jews of, II 90
- Zayonchek, viceroy of, opposed to Jewish emancipation, II 91 f
- Polish Diet unfriendly to Jews of, II 93 f, 99 f
- Government of, passes anti-Jewish restrictions, II 94 f
- condition of Jews in, discussed in Polish literature, II 95 ff
- blood accusation in, II 74; forbidden by Russian Government, II 99
- assimilationist tendencies among Jews of, II 100 ff
- Kahals abolished in, and replaced by *Gminas* (1822), II 102
- Government of, appoints Committee to Polonize Jews, II 103
- anti-Semitism in, II 104 f, 178
- Polish insurrection of 1831, II 33, 105
- Jews volunteer in revolutionary army of, II 105 ff
- Polish writers express sympathy with Jews, II 108 f
- Nicholas I. imposes conscription on Jews of (1843), II 109 f
- prohibition of Jewish dress in Russia extended to (1845), II 110
- Jews of, continue to wear Jewish dress, II 145
- influence of Talmud prevails in, II 51
- Hasidism firmly established in, II 122 f
- Polish insurrection of 1863, II 178 ff, 182 f
- patriotic attitude of Jews in, II 179 ff
- Jewish disabilities in, removed by Alexander II. (1862), II 181; and re-established by Alexander III., 367
- Jews of, accused of separation, II 195
- Poles try to stop pogrom at Warsaw (1881), II 283
- Poles perpetrate pogrom on Jews of Chenstokhov (1902), III 36
- Jewish labor movement in, III 55
- Jews of, active in Russian revolution of 1905, III 107
- terrorism in (1905), III 130
- Jews in, intimidated during Duma elections, III 134
- recrudescence of anti-Semitism in (1905), III 166 ff
- Jews of, subjected to economic boycott (1912), III 167 f
- Jewish life in, depicted by Perez, III 61; and Ash, III 162
- See also Poland (Great), Poland (Little), Polish Language, Polonization, and Warsaw

- Poland, Great, forms feudal principality, I 41 f
 Posen leading city of, I 74, 110, 196
 part of, conquered by Swedes (1655), I 154 f
 part of, annexed by Prussia (1772), I 187; (1793), I 292; (1795), I 297
 formed by Napoleon into Duchy of Warsaw (1807), I 297
 tribunal of, at Piotrkov, I 96
 provincial diet of, I 113
 Boleslav, prince of, grants charter to Jews of principality (1264), I 45, 51
 Jews of, secure ratification of charter (1548), I 83
 Jewish communities of, receive charter of autonomy (1551), I 105 ff
 "senior rabbis" of, confirmed by Sigismund I. (1518), I 105
 represented on Council of Four Lands, I 110
 federated Kahals of, meet periodically, I 196
 Jews of, massacred by Polish troops (1656), I 155 f
 Jewish commercial activity held to be injurious to, I 238
 Polemics, and Political Literature, between Jews and Christians in Poland, I 136 ff
 Police, central department of, in St. Petersburg co-operates with rioters in Kerch, III 120
 abets October pogroma (1905), III 125 f
 charged by First Duma with complicity in pogroms, II 136
 complicity of, in pogroms disclosed by Urussov, III 138
 Police, Political, known as "The Third Section," term explained, II 21
 chief of, appointed on Committee for Radical Transformation of Jews (1840), II 50
- annexation of, completed by Austria (1795), I 297
 added by Napoleon to duchy of Warsaw (1809), I 297
 tribunal of, at Lublin, I 96
 "senior rabbis" of, confirmed by Sigismund I. (1541), I 105, 109, 122
 represented on Council of Four Lands, I 110
 federated Kahals of, meet periodically, I 196
 Jews of, massacred by Polish troops (1656), I 155 f
 Jewish commercial activity held to be injurious to, I 238
 Polemics, and Political Literature, between Jews and Christians in Poland, I 136 ff
 Police, central department of, in St. Petersburg co-operates with rioters in Kerch, III 120
 abets October pogroma (1905), III 125 f
 charged by First Duma with complicity in pogroms, II 136
 complicity of, in pogroms disclosed by Urussov, III 138
 Police, Political, known as "The Third Section," term explained, II 21
 chief of, appointed on Committee for Radical Transformation of Jews (1840), II 50
- Poland, Little, forms feudal principality, I 41 f
 Cracow, leading city of, I 74
 includes Western Galicia, I 53
 part of, conquered by Swedes (1655), I 154 f

- crushes revolutionary endeavors, II 140
- calls forth terrorism, II 184
- distributes anti-Semitic book among detectives, II 204
- reports on revolutionary activities of Jews, II 348
- Polish Language** used for literary purposes by Nahman and Belzhytz, I 136 f
- by rabbi of Khelm, I 283
- by anonymous orthodox rabbi, II 98
- by Jewish weekly, II 213
- See also Language and Polonization
- Politz**, Universal History by, translated into Hebrew, II 134
- Pollak**, Jacob, of Prague, introduces *pilpul* method into Poland, I 122
- Pollak**, of Minsk, offer of, to establish Jewish agricultural colony refused by Government, III 25
- Polonization**, advocated by David Friedländer and his followers, I 386, II 90
- champions of, advocate abolition of Jewish autonomy, II 100
- rabbinical seminary at Warsaw established for, II 103
- among Jewish *intelligenza* in Poland, II 182
- extreme form of, in Warsaw, II 213
- Polonnoye** (Volhynia), Khmelnitzki massacre in (1648), I 148 f
- Jacob Joseph Cohen, rabbi of, I 227, 230
- Polotzk** (government of Vitebsk), Jews of, drowned by Russian invaders (1654), I 243
- Jewish coachmen of, forbidden to drive beyond Pale, II 70
- government of, former name for government of Vitebsk; see Vitebsk (government)
- Kahal of, appealed to by Elijah of Vilna against Hasidism, I 373
- Polovtzis**, succeed Khazars as masters of Crimea, I 29
- Poltava** (city), Osip Rabinovich, Russian-Jewish writer, native of, II 238
- Poltava** (region, or government), subject to Poland, I 140
- ceded to Russia (1667), I 159
- included in Pale (1794), I 317; (1835), II 40
- Pavluk, Cossack leader, massacres Jews of (1637), I 144
- Jews forbidden residence in (1649), I 151; readmitted (1651), I 152
- Jewish communities of, disappear almost entirely (1648), I 157

- few Jews survive in (after 1648), I 246
- Jews of White Russia settle in, 321
- Jews expelled from villages of, II 341
- Localities in:
- Borispol, II 267
- Lokhvitz, I 145
- Lubny, I 144, 145
- Pereyaslav, I 145; II 265
- Piryatyn, I 145
- Pomerania**, annexed by Prussia (1772), I 187, 262
- Poniatovski, Stanislaw Augustus**, king of Poland (1764-1795), reign of, I 180 ff
- election of, preceded by change in system of Jewish taxation, I 197
- protects Simeon Volfovich, spokesman of Vilna Jewish masses, against Kahal, I 276
- receives plan of Jewish reform from Hirshovich, royal broker, I 284
- grants solemn audience to Jews, I 290 f
- Pontus Euxinus**, see Black Sea
- Populism** (in Russian, *narodnichestvo*), branch of Russian revolutionary movement, II 222 f
- anti-Semitic tendency of, II 279 f
- influences Jacob Gordin, II 333
- Popiel**, ancient Polish ruler, I 40
- Popov**, member of "Jewish Committee" of Russian Government, I 352
- Port Arthur**, Jews expelled from, III 94; and denied right of residence in, III 157
- Posen** (*Polish*, Poznan), leading city of Great Poland, I 42, 74, 110, 116
- surrendered by Shlakhta to invading Swedes (1655), I 155
- refugees from crusades settle in, I 41
- Jews of, petition Casimir IV. to renew charter (1447), I 61
- Jews of, petition Sigismund I. to ratify election of rabbis (1518), I 104
- Jews of, persecuted on charge of host desecration, I 55, 95
- riots in, I 64, 75, 90, 95, 161
- Jews of, restricted in economic pursuits, I 74, 95
- magistracy of, joins other cities in economic fight against Jews, I 75
- Jews of, limited to separate quarter, I 75; and forbidden to increase number of houses, I 85
- rights of Jews of, enlarged by Stephen Batory, I 89 f
- Jews of, accused of ritual murder (1736), I 172, 174 ff

- Jewish community of, represented on Council of Four Lands, I 110
 exorcism of devils in, I 203
 rabbis of:
 Naphtali Cohen, I 204
 Solomon Edels (*Maharsho*), I 129
 Sheftel Horowitz, I 135, 158
 Mordecai Jaffe, I 127
 Solomon Luria (*Maharshah*), native of, I 120
 Arie Leib Calahora, preacher in, I 175
- Posen, province of, annexed by Prussia (1772), I 187, 262
 Polish troops destroy Jewish communities in (1656), I 156
- Posner, Solomon, prominent Jew in Warsaw, II 103
- Potemkin, Nota Shklover purveyor to army of, I 338
- Pototzki (*Polish*, *Potocki*), commander of Polish army, I 145
- Politzki, voyevoda of Kiev, I 184
- Polotzki, Severin, member of "Jewish Committee" of Russian Government (1802), I 335
- Politzki, Stanislav, delivers eulogy on Berek Yoselovich, I 303 f
- Praga, suburb of Warsaw, attached by Russian Government (1802), I 335
 home of Berek Yoselovich, I 294
- Prague, capital of Bohemia, visited by Pethahiah of Ratisbon, I 33
 Jews attacked by crusaders in, I 41
 Mordecai Jaffe, rabbi of, I 127
- Pravo ("The Law"), Russian journal, suppressed for protesting against Kishinev massacre, III 77
 protests against court verdict in Homel pogrom, III 103 f
- Prayer, importance of, emphasized by Besht, I 226
 Hasidim adopt Ari's form of, I 231
- Press, Russian, used euphemistically to designate Russian Government, II 386
 pursues anti-Semitic policy, II 278, 379, III 31 f
 makes no reference to expulsion from Moscow, II 407
 liberal P. protests against Kishinev massacre, III 76 f
 stifled by Plehve, III 77
- Press, Jewish, in Russia, II 216 ff
 in Hebrew, II 217 f, 372, III 58, 162
 in Yiddish, III 58 f, 162
 in Russian, II 218 ff, 277 f;
 yields to press in Hebrew, II 372
- Press, Foreign, protest against Jewish disabilities, II 381
 reports (together with Russian P.) on anti-Semitic exploits of Russian officials, II 384

- denounces expulsion of Jews from Moscow, II 407 f
- protests against Kishinev massacre, III 77
- See Printing-Presses
- Prakahalki**, name for minor Kahals, I 108, 193; see Kahals
- Priluker, Jacob**, founder of Judeo-Christian sect, II 334 f becomes Christian missionary, II 335
- Printing-Press**, Hebrew, of Cracow and Lublin, I 131
- of Vilna, II 42, 115, 127
- of Slavuta, II 42, 123
- of Kiev, II 43; transferred to Zhitomir, II 43
- establishment of, by Russian Government, suggested by Dyerzhavin, I 333
- See Censorship
- Professions**, restrictions in pursuit of, II 26 f; see Bar, and Physicians; also Education and University
- Pro-Gymnazium**, term explained, III 29; see Gymnazium
- Prokhonvik, Abraham**, legendary king of Poland, I 40
- Property, Real**; see Villages
- Propination** (*Polish*, *Propinacya*), right of distilling and selling liquor, term explained, I 67
- carried on by Jews in Poland, I 67; and Ukraine, I 141
- forced upon Jews by economic factors, I 266 f
- from Polish pan by Jewish arendar, I 93, 170, 265
- connected with other economic pursuits, I 93, 361 f
- elimination of Jews from, advocated by Polish reformers (1782), I 272 f, 280; recommended by Polish Government Committee (1815), II 89; and demanded by Polish Diet (1818), II 100
- law barring Jews from, issued by Duchy of Warsaw (1812), I 304 f; but vetoed by Alexander I. (1816), II 94
- participation of Jews in, defended by Polish officer, II 98
- Jews of annexed White Russia hampered in pursuit of (1784), I 311 ff
- Polish nobles of annexed Polish provinces advocate elimination of Jews from, I 323 ff
- abuses of, set forth by Russian Government Committee (1804), I 341 f
- committee appointed to consider elimination of Jews from (1809), I 352 f; but reports against it (1812), I 353 f
- economic mainstay of village Jewry, I 361 f

- nobility of White Russia demands elimination of Jews from, I 405; decreed for villages of White Russia (1823), I 406
- occupies central place in economic structure of Russian Jewry, II 72
- big Jewish capital transferred from, to railroad, II 186
- Government Committee recommends elimination of Jews from (1882), II 310
- Government monopoly of, urged as means of removing Jews from villages, III 17
- effects of Government monopoly of, III 22 f
- See Villages
- Protestantism, see Reformation
- Protyorey, Russian ecclesiastic title, term explained, II 301
- Prussia shares in partition of Poland, I 185 f, 262, 292, 297
- participates in siege of Warsaw (1794), I 293
- rules over Warsaw (1796-1806), I 385
- shattered by Napoleon, I 347
- represented at Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle, I 398 f
- introduces Jewish reforms in annexed Polish provinces, I 385
- Jewish regulations of, serve as model for Russian statemen, I 331, II 46, 49
- Jewish socialist expelled from, II 224
- See Berlin
- Pshemyshl (*Polish*, Pszemysl), see Stupnitsa
- Pskov, Jews exiled from (1654), I 154
- situated outside Pale, II 70
- Ptolemies, the Jewish center under rule of, I 14
- Pulawy, Poland, Jews of, manifest Polish patriotism, I 292
- Pushkin, Russian poet, relation of, to Jews, II 138
- Pyetukhov, member of political police, exposes complicity of Government in pogrom, III 140
- Quadrennial Diet, see Diet, Quadrennial
- Raaben, von, governor of Bessarabia, refuses to stop Kishinev pogrom, III 74 f
- sued for damages by Jews, III 92
- Rabbanites, in Crimea, I 28, 34
- Rabbinical Commission, appointed by Russian Government (1842), II 56
- Jews of Western Europe invited to participate in, II 67
- Rabbi Mendel of Lubavich member of, II 118

- Rabbinical Schools** (modern),
 opened by assimilationist
 Jews in Warsaw (1826), II
 103 f
 opening of, decreased by Nicho-
 las I. (1844), II 38
 pupils of, promised allevia-
 tions in military service, II
 58
 graduates of, intended to
 supersede former type of
 rabbis and teachers, II 58,
 176
 opened in Vilna and Zhitomir
 (1847), II 59, 174 f
 graduates of, act as Govern-
 ment agents, II 212
 graduates of, form revolution-
 ary circle, II 223
 Levanda, graduate of, II 239
 closed (1873), II 177
- Rabbinism** opposes Hasidism, I
 233 f, 235 ff
 opposes enlightenment, I 238 f
 firmly entrenched during reign
 of Alexander I., 380
 uncompromising attitude of,
 II 111 ff
- Rabbis** (and Rabbinate), offici-
 ally recognized by Polish
 king, I 104 ff
 clothed with wide powers, I 73,
 105 ff
 bear title of *Morenu*, I 117
 relation of, to Kahal, I 107 f
 conferences of, I 108 f
- conference of, "tries" demons
 in Posen, I 203
 accused of purchasing offices
 from pans, I 284
 jurisdiction of, limited to
 religious affairs (1804), I
 344
 deprived of right of imposing
herem (1804), I 344
 highly respected by Jews of
 Russia, II 112
 exempted from military ser-
 vice, II 20
 reform of, recommended by
 Council of State, II 49; by
 I. B. Levinsohn, II 128; and
 by other Maskilim, II 136 f
 fanaticism of, attacked by
 Mapu, II 227 f
 See Crown Rabbis
- Rabinovich, I.**, founder of Con-
 gregation of New Testament
 Israelites, II 335
- Rabinovich, Osip (Joseph)**,
 editor of *Razsvyet*, II 219 f
 author of Jewish novels (in
 Russian), II 238
- Rabinovitz, S.**, see Shalom
 Aleichem
- Radom**, see Shidlovitz
- Radziejevski**, Polish sub-chan-
 cellor, betrays Poland to
 Swedes, I 155
- Radzionovski**, Greek-Orthodox
 priest, admonishes rioters at
 Balta, I 301 f

- Radziwill, Prince**, patron of Saul Wahl, I 94
- Radziwill, voyevoda of Vilna**, settles dispute between rabbis and Kahal, I 276
- Railroads**, Jews become interested in, II 186
- Rakhmistorvka** (government of Kiev), hasidic center, II 120
- Randar**, see **Arendar**
- Rashi**, works of, studied in Poland, I 117
- Ratisbon**, see **Pethahiah of Ratisbon**
- Ratner, M.**, counsel for victims of Homel pogrom, III 102
- member of Central Committee of League for Equal Rights, III 112
- Rav (or Rov)**, name for rabbi, II 120
- Ravski, M.**, prominent Jew in Warsaw, II 103
- Razryaden**, "Assortment" of Jews; see **Assortment**
- Razsvyet ("The Dawn")**, Jewish periodical in Russian, II 218, 219 f, 238
- resumes publication, after interruption, in St. Petersburg, II 221, 277
- publishes statement of Ignatyev inviting Jews to emigrate, II 285
- favors organization of emigration movement, II 298
- champions "Love of Zion," II 332
- discontinued (1883), II 372
- appears again in St. Petersburg, III 162
- Razumovksi**, president of Russian academy, deplotes anti-Jewish prejudice, I 258
- Real Estate**, see **Villages**
- Rebbe**, popular name for Tzaddik, or hasidic leader, II 120; see **Tzaddik**
- Recanati, Menahem**, Italian Cabalist, work of, studied in Poland, I 134
- Recruits (and Recruiting)**, recruiting ukase of 1827, II 18 ff
- minor recruits, see **Cantonists**
- Jewish committee, or **Kahals**, held responsible for quota of, II 19 f
- oath of allegiance of, marked by great solemnity, II 20
- kept apart from non-Jewish recruits, II 21
- recruiting (or conscription) trustees of **Kahals**, II 19 f; turned into police agents, II 22 f; retained after abolition of Kahal, II 60; made personally responsible for completion of quota, II 147
- sent to recruiting jails, II 24
- divorce wives before leaving home, II 28

- drafting of "penal" recruits decreed (1850), II 147 f
- community of Mstislavl punished by drafting penal recruits, II 86
- individual Jews permitted to capture recruits as substitutes (1853), II 148 f
- See Military Service and Soldiers
- Red Russia**, see Russia, Red
- Reforms**, religious, in Judaism, advocated by Lilienblum, II 236
- preached by Jacob Gordin (and others), II 333 ff
- reform Judaism attacked by Smolenskin, II 234
- Reformation** affects unfavorably position of Jews in Poland, I 79 f, 85 ff
- stimulates literary polemics, I 135 ff
- Polish adherents of, welcome invading Swedes, I 155
- fear of, responsible for Jewish tragedy in Cracow, I 164 f
- Russian sect of Stundists traceable to influence of, II 333
- Reisin**, Yiddish writer, III 162
- Renan** protests against Jewish persecutions, II 326
- Repnin**, governor-general of Lithuania, promises to respect Jewish autonomy, I 320
- "**Republic**" (*Polish*, *Rzecz Pospolita*), title applied to Poland (after 1572), I 88, 262
- Residence, Right of**, denied to Jews in towns of ancient Poland; see "*De non Tolerandis Iudæis*"; particularly in Warsaw, I 85, 268, 300; II 94 f
- tax paid by Jews for, in Warsaw, II 95
- all restrictions in, abolished in Poland (1862), II 181; re-introduced by Alexander III. (1891), II 367
- withdrawn from Jews of Ukraina (1649), I 151; and returned to them (1651), II 152
- withdrawn from Jews of Little Russia (1727), I 250
- in ancient Russia, see Moscow, principality of
- in modern Russia, see Interior, Pale of Settlement, and Expulsions
- outside of cities and towns, see Villages
- non-Jews plead before Government for grant of, to Jews, I 256, II 319
- denied to Jews in health and summer resorts, III 18 ff, 154, 157
- See also Capitals, and under Kiev and Moscow

Resolution, term explained, I 253

by Empress Anna, sentencing Borukhov and Voznitzin to death (1738), I 253

by Empress Elizabeth, excluding Jews from Russia (1741), I 257; referred to by Empress Catherine II., I 259, 261

by Paul I., approving of anti-Jewish restrictions (1797), I 323

by Nicholas I., postponing expulsion of Jews from villages, opposing admission of Jewish merchants to Interior, II 36; expelling Jews from 50-vert zone, II 62; limiting Jewish coachmen to Pale, II 70; closing synagogues in Velizh, II 78; expressing doubt about existence of ritual murder, II 80; punishing Jews of Mstislavl, II 86

R's. of Alexander III. assume power of laws, II 339

by Nicholas II., opposing abrogation of Pale, III 11

Resorts, see Residence, Right of

Restrictions, against Jews, enormous extent of, admitted by Pahlen Commission, II 364

Guildhall meeting in London protests against, II 391

Russian governors favor repeal of, III 93

regarded by Council of Ministers as cause of revolutionary movement among Jews, III 141

new R's. decreed by Third Duma, III 156 f

in army, II 319 f, 354 ff

in commerce, see Commerce

in dress, see Dress

in keeping domestics, see Domestics

in education, II 348 ff, III 27 ff; see Educational Restriction

in language, see Language

in professions, II 352 f, III 26 f

in trades, see Artisans

in rights of residence, see Residence, Right of, also Interior and Pale

Revolutionary Movement, in Russia, unfriendly attitude of, towards Jews, I 409 ff

anti-Semitic tendency of, II 279 f

early pogroms ascribed to influence of, II 259 f, 269, 279

Jews participate in, II 198, 221 ff, 243 f, III 67 ff, 105 ff

Jewish college men join ranks of, II 348; particularly graduates of foreign universities, III 31

Jews held responsible for, III 70

- spread of, among Jews, admitted by Russian officials as due to restrictive laws, II 364 f, III 93, 141
- participation of Jews in, blamed for pogroms, II 305, III 89 152; intensifies anti-Semitism, III 16; prompts anti-Jewish restrictions at universities, III 28
- pogroms engineered for suppression of, III 66 ff, 137
- pogroms intensify spread of, among Jews, III 90
- Zionism prohibited as contributory to, III 82
- intensified after death of Plehve, III 98
- combated by Black Hundred, III 124 ff
- Jewish participants in, executed, III 140; see Bund and Socialism
- Rhescupondes, Dynasty of**, rulers of Jewish colonies in Crimea, I 14 f
- Rhine**, the, Jewish immigration into Poland from, I 41
- Richelieu**, Duke, governor of Kherson, interested in Jewish agriculture, I 363 f
- Richter, De**, aide-de-camp of Alexander III., receives pro-Jewish petition from Mayor of London, II 393
- Riesser, Gabriel**, German-Jewish publicist, II 219
- compared with Osip Rabinovich, II 238
- Riga**, magistracy of, protests against contemplated expulsion of Jews (1743), I 256
- Jews of White Russia forbidden to settle in, I 313
- Max Lilienthal resides in, II 52
- Lilienthal's school in, pointed to as model, II 137
- Jewish community of, protests against denial of Jewish franchise (1905), III 121
- See also Livonia
- Rindfleisch**, persecution of, in Germany, drives Jews into Poland, I 50
- Riots**, see Pogroms
- Ripon**, Bishop of, addresses Guildhall meeting in favor of Russian Jews, II 391
- Rishon-le-Zion**, Jewish colony in Palestine, II 322, 375
- Ritual Murder Libel** (blood accusation), forbidden by Boleslav of Kalish (1264), I 47; by Sigismund II. (1564 and 1566), I 88; by Stephen Batory (1575), I 89
- frequency of, in Poland, I 95, 172 ff, II 74, 99
- General of Dominican Order in Rome warns Poles against (1664), I 165
- Polish Jews appeal to pope against (1758), I 179

prohibition of, confirmed by Augustus III. (1763), I 180
 supported by sect of Frankists. I 216 f
 forbidden in kingdom of Poland by Russian Government (1817), II 99
 repeated by Abbé Chiarini in Warsaw, II 104
 prejudices Peter the Great against Jews, I 247 f
 assumes malign aspect under Nicholas I., II 73
 believed by Nicholas I., I 79, 83
 affects Jewish legislation in Russia, II 79
 refuted by Isaac Baer Levinsohn, II 131
 commission for investigation of, appointed by Nicholas I. (1854), II 151
 defended by Lutostanski, II 203 f, 244
 Alexander III. gives credence to, II 203, 244
 championed by *Novoye Vremya*, II 205
 preached by Krushevan, III 70
 cases of (in Poland):
 Bielsk, I 87
 Cracow, I 56 f
 Lenchitza, I 100 f
 Lublin, I 96, 100
 Posen, I 172
 Ruzhany, I 162 ff
 Sandomir, I 172 ff

Zaslav, I 172
 Zhitomir, I 178
 minor places, I 178
 cases of (in Russia):
 Dubossary, III 71
 Gordonya, II 247 f
 Grodno, II 73
 Kiev (Beilis trial), see Beilis
 Kishinev, III 71
 Kutais (Caucasus), II 204
 Nizhni-Novgorod, II 360 f
 Saratov, II 150 ff
 Velizh, II 75 ff
 Vilna (Blondes trial), III 37
 Rivkes, Moses, of Vilna, Hebrew author, I 200
 Rodichev, Duma deputy, denounces Bialystok pogrom, II 137, 139
 defends Jews, III 156
 Rodkinson, publishes *ha-Kol*, II 223
 Rogov, Anton, propagates "Judaizing heresy," I 402
 Roman Empire, immigration into Western Europe proceeds from, I 13
 sovereignty of, acknowledged by rulers of Crimea, I 14 f
 menaced by Khazars, I 20
 Rome, nuncio Lippomano dispatched from, to Poland, I 86
 general of Dominican Order in, defends Polish Jews, I 165
 Ambassador of Muscovy at, I 242

- Romny**, pogrom at (October 1905), III 128
- Ronne and Simon**, quoted, I 331
- Rosenthal**, Leon, founder of Society for Diffusion of Enlightenment, II 214
- Rosenthal**, N., leader of Vilna Maskilim, II 136
- Rosh-Pinah**, Jewish colony in Palestine, II 375
- Rosh-Yeshibah**, head of Talmudic academy, recognized by Polish Government, I 115 f
position of in Jewish community, I 116 ff
- Rossie**, mythical philosopher, quoted in support of blood accusation, II 73
- Rostov** (on the Don), placed outside Pale and closed to Jews, II 346
pogrom at, II 358
- Rothschild**, Alphonse de, of Paris, refuses to participate in Russian loan, II 408
attacked by *Novoye Vremya*, II 410
refusal of, infuriates Russian Government, II 417
- Rothschild**, Edmond de, of Paris, supports Jewish colonization of Palestine, II 375 f, 422
- Rothschild**, Nathaniel de, of London, member of Committee for Pogrom Victims, II 291
- Rothschilds**, the, of Paris, offer to pay transportation of Russian Jews to Algiers, II 69
expected to participate in Russian loan, II 407 f
- Roumania** compelled by Congress of Berlin to emancipate Jews, II 202
Jews of, establish colonies in Palestine, II 375
- Rovno** (Volhynia), pogrom at, III 99
- Rum**, name for Byzantium, I 24
- Russ**, old name for Russia, I 33;
Red Russia, I 115
- Russ**, anti-Semitic newspaper in Moscow, II 278, 325
- Russia**, ancient, see Moscow, principality of, and Kiev, principality of
exercises protectorate over Poland, I 181
Jews expelled from (1741), I 255
shares in partition of Poland, I 186 f, 262, 292, 297, 314
joins Prussia in besieging Warsaw (1794), I 293
represented at Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle, I 398
Jews of Poland transferred to, I 241
Jews of White Russia brought under dominion of (1792), I 306 ff

- attitude of, towards Jews, I 242 ff
 admission of Jews to, favored by Senate and refused by Catherine II., I 259 f
 follows traditional Muscovite policy in excluding Jews, I 246 f, 341, II 35 f
 institutes Pale of Settlement, I 314
 adopts policy of exceptional laws, I 314 ff
 Jews loyal to, in Franco-Russian War (1812), I 355 ff
 Zionists of, assemble at Minsk Convention, III 45
 importance of Zionism for Jews of, II 146 ff
 Russia, Great, laborers from, active in pogroms, II 248, 256, 359
 Russia, Little, population of, I 53
 ceded to Russia (1654), I 94, 153
 annexed by Russia (1667), I 159, 244
 Jews barred from, I 246
 ritual murder in, I 247 f
 Jews expelled from (1727), I 249 f
 Cossacks of, protest against exclusion of Jews, I 250
 Jews admitted to fairs of, I 250 f
 Jews penetrate into, and settle in, I 253, 255
 expelled again from (1740), I 254
 inhabitants of, protest against exclusion of Jews, I 256
 admission of Jews into, favored by Senate, I 257
 Empress Elizabeth insists on expulsion of Jews from (1844), I 257
 representatives of, plead for admission of Jews, I 260
 Catherine II. refuses to admit Jews into, I 261
 included in Pale (1794), I 317; (1804), 342; (1835), II 40
 Jews of White Russia settle in, I 321 f
 Great Russians, or *Katzaps*, prepare pogroms in, II 248, 256, 359
 Russia, New (South Russia), steppes of, inhabited by Cossacks, I 142 f
 Jews permitted to settle in (1791), I 316
 Karaites of, granted special privileges (1795), I 318
 included in Pale (1804), I 342; (1835), II 40
 expelled village Jews beg to be transferred to, I 352
 Jews of White Russia settle as farmers in, I 363 f
 agricultural immigration into, temporarily stopped (1810), I 365

- Government attempts to settle
"Israelitish Christians" in,
I 400
- Jewish agricultural colonies in,
II 70 f, 197
- Max Lilienthal makes educa-
tional tour, through, II 56
- represented on Rabbinical Com-
mission of Bezalel Stern, II
57
- Odessa, capital of, center of
Haskalah, II 132
- Vorontzov, governor-general of,
defends Jews, II 64 ff
- Stroganov, governor-general of,
advocates emancipation of
Jews, II 168 f
- pogroms in, II 249 ff
- See Odessa
- Russia, Red**, occasionally called
Russia (or Russ), I 75, 115
- corresponds to Eastern Galicia,
I 53
- forms independent principality,
I 53
- annexed by Casimir the Great,
I 42, 53
- Lemberg, leading city of, I 74
- invaded by Khmelnitzki, I 150 f
- Jews forbidden to sell cloth in,
I 75
- Jews of, represented on Coun-
cil of Four Lands, I 110
- federated Kahals of, I 196
- Solomon of Lemberg, chosen
spiritual head of, I 115
- voyevoda of, grants constitu-
tion to Lemberg Jews, I 191
- See Lemberg
- Russia, White**, Ukrainian bands
penetrate into (1648), I
149
- invaded by Russian troops
(1654), I 153 f, 244 f
- annexed by Russia (1772), I
186, 262, 306
- divided into two governments
(Moghilev and Vitebsk), I
307
- becomes Jewish intellectual
center, I 159 f
- federated Kahals of, I 196
- traces of Sabbatian propa-
ganda in, I 205
- differs intellectually from
South-west, I 221
- Hasidism spreads in, I 230,
238, 372; but excelled by
Rabbinism, I 274
- distinct character of Hasidism
in, I 233 ff
- Kahals of, appealed to by
Elijah Gaon against Hasi-
dism, I 373
- Hasidism in, founded by
Shneor Zalman, I 234, 356,
II 57; and represented by his
dynasty, II 117
- Jews of, penetrate into Mos-
cow, I 245; and Smolensk, I
249

Russian Government promises
 Jews of, preservation of
 ancient liberties (1772), I
 306 f, 308
 Jews of, numbered and taxed,
 I 307
 internal organization of Jews
 in, I 308 ff
 Kahals of, recognized by Gov-
 ernment, I 309; but re-
 stricted to spiritual affairs
 and collection of taxes, I 313
 Jews of, oppressed by Passek,
 governor-general, I 310 ff
 Jews of, appeal to Catherine
 II., I 311
 Jews of, refused permission to
 settle in Riga, I 313; and
 outside of White Russia in
 general, 315 f
 included in Pale (1794), I 317;
 (1804), I 342; (1835, except
 villages), II 40
 Jews of, immigrate to New
 Russia, I 364, II 70
 famine in (1821), I 329
 Dyerzhavin sent as investi-
 gator to, I 328 f, 386
 Jews of, emigrate to New Rus-
 sia, I 364; II 70
 Jews in, elected to municipal
 offices, I 368
 Jews of, marked by public
 spirit, I 379
 traces of "Enlightenment" in,
 I 386

new famine in (1821), sug-
 gests expulsion of Jews from
 villages, I 405 f
 expulsion of Jews from villages
 of, decreed (1823), I 406;
 and carried out, I 407; de-
 nounced as useless by Coun-
 cil of State (1835), I 407,
 II 34 f
 expelled village Jews of, settle
 in New Russia, II 70
 Jewish agricultural settle-
 ments in, II 72
 Khovanski, governor-general
 of, active in ritual murder
 trial, II 76 ff; see Velizh
 pogroms checked by authorities
 of (1881), II 267
 pogroms spread in, III 87 ff,
 100 f; see Moghilev, Vitebsk,
 and Villages
 Russian Language, the, Jewish
 literature in, II 238 ff
 Jewish writers in, hail from
 South, II 238
 declared native language of
 Jews by sect "New Israel,"
 II 334
 Jewish press in, III 59, 162
 Frug, Jewish poet, writes in,
 III 63
 Jewish science in, III 65
 See also Language
 Russian Poland, see Poland
 Russians, the, tribe, in land of
 Khazars, I 22

- relation of, to Khazars, I 26, 28
 converted to Greek-Orthodoxy,
 I 31
 See Russia
- Russification** of Jews, under
 Alexander II., II 174 ff,
 206 ff, 215
 advocated by Orshanski, II
 239; and Levanda, II 239 f
 discarded by Jewish *intelli-
 genzia*, II 326 ff, III 163
- Russkaya Zhizn** ("Russian
 Life"), newspaper in St.
 Petersburg, pictures suffer-
 ings of Moscow Jews, II 397
- Russki Vvestnik** ("Russian
 Herald"), Russian maga-
 zine, defends Jews, II 207 f
- Russki Yevrey** ("The Russian
 Jew"), Jewish weekly in
 Russian, in St. Petersburg,
 II 221, 277
 pursues moderate policy, II 332
 discontinued (1884), II 372
- Russo-Japanese War** interrupts
 labor of Government Com-
 mission on Jewish Question,
 III 93
 participation of Jews in, III
 94 ff
- Jewish veterans of, granted
 universal right of residence,
 III 98 f
- Jewish surgeons in, accused of
 revolutionary propaganda,
 III 156
- Jewish soldiers in, denied resi-
 dence in Port Arthur, III
 157
- Ruthenians, or Little Russians.**
 the, I 53
 belong to Uniat Church, I 141;
 see Russia, Little
- Ruzhany** (province of Grodno),
 ritual murder case of, I 162
- Ruzhin, Israel** of, hasidic leader,
 II 120 f
- Rybalenko**, alleged victim of
 ritual murder, III 71
- Sabbatai Zevi**, name of, left out
 by Halperin, contemporary
 Polish-Jewish chronicler, I
 201
- Hayyun, emissary of, I 204
 Polish Jews respond to claims
 of, I 204; and send deputa-
 tion to, I 206 f
 betrayed by Nehemiah Cohen,
 I 207
 Polish Jews loyal to, I 207
 Jacob Frank considered rein-
 carnation of, I 212 f, 214;
 and follows example of, I
 216
- See Sabbatians
- Sabbatarians**, the, "Sabbath ob-
 servers," "Judaizing" sect
 in Russia, I 401 ff
- Sabbatians**, the, adherents of
 Sabbatai Zevi, movement of,
 in Poland, I 204 ff

- Council of Four Lands objects to, I 196
 join adherents of Judah Hasid, I 209
 pose as Mohammedans, I 210
 continue secretly in Podolia and Galicia, I 210 f
 Jacob Frank associates with, I 212 ff
 Hasidim accused of continuing work of, I 376
- Sack**, St. Petersburg banker, member of Jewish deputation to Alexander III., II 261
- "**Sacred League**," The, organization of high Russian officials, suspected of assisting pogroms, II 248
- Sadogora** (Bukovina), Israel of Ruzhin settles in, II 121
 hasidic dynasty of, II 121
- Safed** (Palestine), Ari and Vital. Cabalists, in, I 134, 134
- Salant** (government of Kovno), M. A. Ginzburg, Hebrew writer, native of, II 133
- Salisbury**, Lord, English premier, answers interpellation concerning Jewish persecutions in Russia, II 382
- Saloniki**, center of Sabbatian movement, I 207
 Jacob Frank resides in, I 212
- Samkers**, Jewish city on Taman Peninsula, I 23
- Samkrtz** (Samkers), locality in Crimea, I 26
- Samogitia** (Zhmd), Russian province, name explained, I 293, II 133
- Samson**, of Ostropol, cabalist and martyr, I 148 f
- Samoyeds**, tribe in government of Archangel, II 367
- Samuel Ben Ali**, Gaon of Bagdad, corresponds with Moses of Kiev, I 33
- San**, river, provinces on, invaded by Swedes, I 154
- Sanchez, Antonio**, Jewish court physician in Russia, I 258
- Sandomir** (Galicia), ritual murder of, I 172 ff
 Jews expelled from, I 173
- Saratov** (city), ritual murder of, II 150 ff
 pogrom at, III 130
- Saratov** (government), "Judaizing" movement in, I 401 f
- Sardis**, city in Asia Minor, Jewish community in, I 14
- Sarkel**, city in Crimea, I 26
- Sarmatians**, tribe, I 14
- Sassanido**, dynasty of, in Persia, I 19
- Satanov** (Podolia), rabbis assembly at, I 213
 Mendel Lewin, Hebrew writer, native of, I 388
- Savitzki**, convert, accuses Jews of ritual murder, II 73
- Savory**, Sir Jospheh, Lord Mayor of London, presides at Guildhall meeting, II 390 ff

- signs and forwards to Tzar
petition on behalf of Russian
Jews, II 392
- Savranski, Moses, hasidic leader,
II 121
- Saym (*Polish*, Sejm), see Diet
- Saymists, the, name of Jewish
Socialistic Labor Party, III
145
- Sazónov, Russian terrorist, kills
Plehve, III 97
- Schechter, Solomon, quoted, I 27
- Schiller, impressed by auto-
biography of Solomon Mai-
mon, I 240
- works of, translated into He-
brew, II 226
- Schiltberber, German traveller,
refers to Jews in Crimea, I
34
- Schluesselburg, near St. Peters-
burg, prison at, II 97
- Schneider, warden of Moscow
synagogue, exiled, II 424
- School, traditional Jewish, see
Heder and Yeshibah
- modern Jewish S's. in Odessa
(1826), II 133; and in Riga
and Kishinev, II 52
- S. of Handicrafts (in Zhito-
mir) closed by Alexander
III. (1884), II 347
- large S. fund offered to Rus-
sian Government by Baron
Hirsch, II 415; transferred
to S's. in Galicia, II 416
- Jewish trade S. in Moscow, III
13
- Talmud Torah S. in Moscow,
III 13
- sending of Jews to Russian
Government S's. urged by
Friesel, governor of Vilna,
I 327, and Dyerzhavin, I 333
- Statute of 1804 permits Jews
to attend Government S's.,
or to open secular S's. of
their own, I 344 f
- Jews shun secular S's., I 350,
380
- graduates of Government S's.
exempted from military ser-
vice (1827), II 20
- Council of State criticises tra-
ditional Jewish S. (1840), II
48; and suggests special
Government (or Crown)
S's. for Jews, II 49
- opening of network of Jewish
Crown S's. urged by Uvarov,
II 51
- S. of Lilienthal in Riga serves
as model, II 52
- Lilienthal commissioned to or-
ganize Crown S's., II 56
- opening of Crown S's. decreed
by Nicholas I. (1844), II 58
- attendance at Crown S's. made
compulsory, II 58
- attendance at Crown S's. stim-
ulated by alleviation in
military service, II 58, 164,
174

- graduation from Crown S's. made obligatory for rabbis and teachers, II 58
- Crown S's. expected to weaken influence of Talmud, II 51, 58
- Crown S's. opened (1847), II 59, 174
- attendance at Crown S's. insignificant, II 175
- Crown S's. closed (1873), II 177
- J. L. Gordon and Levanda active as teachers in Crown S's., II 228, 239
- Russian Government abandons fight against traditional Jewish S. (1879), II 177
- attendance at general Government S's. urged by Russian officials, II 163 ff
- Jews begin to flock to Russian S's., II 209
- Russian S's. as assimilationist factor, II 209
- governors-general of Odessa and Kharkov suggest restrictive percentage for Jews at gymnazia (school norm), II 339
- question of S. norm submitted by Pahlen Commission, II 339; and disapproved by majority thereof, II 348
- Dyelanov, Minister of Public Instruction, directed by Alexander III. to frame enactment embodying S. norm, II 339, 349
- S. norm decreed by ministerial circular (1887), II 350 f; without preliminary submission to Council of State, II 349
- S. norm results in large number of Jewish "externs," II 351, III 31
- attendance at commercial S's. and gymnazia further restricted (1901), III 29 f
- Jewish girls free to attend secondary S's. (gymnazia), but restricted in higher S's., III 30 f
- Pahlen, governor of Vilna, advocates separate S's. for Jews (1903), III 152
- S. norm abolished in institutions of higher learning (1905), III 124; but restored (1907), III 152
- S. norm placed on Statute books (1909), III 158
- many higher S's. barred to Jews, III 158
- S. norm applied to private S's., III 158 f; and extended to "externs" (1911), III 159
- one hundred Jewish students excluded from Kiev Polytechnicum (1907), III 152

- Jews barred from Military Academy of Medicine (1910), III 156
- See Education, Enlightenment, and University
- Schorr, Solomon, follower of Jacob Frank, I 217
- Schülergelauf, see Pogroms (in Poland)
- Schussberg, Gabriel, describes Cossack massacres of 1648, I 158
- Schwartz, informer against Jews, II 48
- Schwartz, Russian Minister of Public Instruction, opposed to Jews, III 157 f
- Scythians, the, tribe, I 14
- Sejm, see Saym
- Selek, see Jacob Zelig
- Seleneids, dynasty of, I 14
- Self-Defence, organized by Jews, in riot at Lemberg (1664), I 161 f
- in Posen (1687), I 166
- in massacre at Uman (1768), I 184 f
- averts pogrom at Berdychev (1881), I 256 f
- intensifies pogrom at Konotop (Chernigov, 1881), II 257
- checked by police in Odessa (1881), II 258; and punished in court, II 264
- active in pogrom at Warsaw (1881), II 281
- forbidden by authorities (during Balta pogrom, 1882), II 300
- organized after Kishinev massacre, III 80
- forbidden by Plehve, III 80, 90
- active in pogrom at Homel (1903), III 87 ff; attacked by police, III 88; arraigned in court, III 102
- Jews of Odessa organize (1904), III 96
- pogroms checked by, at Melitopol and Simferopol (government of Tavrida, 1905), III 115
- displays heroism during pogrom at Zhitomir (1905), III 116 ff
- movement for, intensified during revolution of 1905, III 119
- attacked by soldiers during pogrom at Kerch (1905), III 120
- police and soldiers ordered to drive off, III 129
- displays heroism in Odessa pogrom (October, 1905), III 129; court-martialed, III 150
- Self-Government, Jewish, see Autonomy
- local and rural, see Zemstvos
- urban, see Municipalities

- Selim II.**, Sultan of Turkey, attended by Jewish body-physician, I 132
- Semender** (Tarku), city in Caucasus, I 26
- Semipalatinsk** (territory), in Central Asia, uncivilized tribes of, placed on level with Jews, II 367
- Semiryechensk** (territory), in Central Asia, semi-civilized tribes of, placed on level with Jews, II 367
- Semyonovka** (government of Chernigov), pogrom at, III 129
- Senate**, the, in Poland, forms upper Chamber, I 167
censures King Sobieski for favoring Jews, I 167
re-established by Napoleon in duchy of Warsaw, I 298
refuses petition of Jews for equal rights, I 301 f
- Senate**, the, in Russia, recommends death penalty for conversion to Judaism (1738), I 253
decrees expulsion of Jews from Little Russia (1739), I 254
recommends admission of Jews to Little Russia and Livonia (1743), I 257
favors admission of Jews into Russian empire (1763), I 259
- sanctions Kahals in White Russia (1778), I 309; but suddenly questions their legality (1782), I 310; and restricts them to spiritual affairs and collection of taxes (1786), I 313
restricts Jews of White Russia in liquor trade (1786), I 312
refuses permission to White Russian Jews to settle in Riga, thus laying foundation for Pale (1786), I 313 f
reaffirms Catherine's ukase ordering transfer of village Jews to towns (1797), I 323 f
Friesel, governor of Vilna, forwards suggestions of Jewish reforms to, I 326 f
declares Jews not subject to serfdom, I 328
Dyerzhavin's memorandum on Jews laid before (1800), I 334
loses executive power with creation of Council of State (1801), I 335
case against Shneor Zalman transferred to, I 378
Jewish communal affairs transferred from, to Minister of Ecclesiastic Affairs (1817), I 392
prohibits keeping of Christian domestics (1820), I 404

puts harsh interpretation on decree of Nicholas I. expelling Jews from Fifty-Verst Zone (1843), II 62 f
 takes over ritual murder case of Velizh (1830), II 81
 sends ukase to governors warning against pogroms (1882), II 313
 sets aside misconstruction of Temporary Rules (1884), II 341
 sustains law of 1874 denying universal right of residence to discharged Jewish soldiers (1885), II 355
 passes upon complaints against misapplication of Temporary Rules, III 17; and reverses decisions of lower courts, III 18
 sustains expulsion of consumptive Jewish student from health resort, III 19
 sustains practice of confining Jews of Siberia to their places of registration (1897), III 22
 orders second trial of Blondes, III 37
 sustains sentence against "Dashevski, assailant of Krushevan, II 82
 dismisses complaint of victims of Kishinev massacres, III 92

receives ukase from Nicholas II. permitting submission of suggestions to Government (1905), III 110
 declares Zionism illegal (1907), III 152
 prohibits Jewish soldiers from residing in Port Arthur, III 157
 "Senior," the, title for elder in Poland, I 72 f, 94
 title for chief rabbi in Poland, I 105
 Separatism, of Jews, ascribed by Russian Government to their inferior "moral status," II 158
 combated by Russian Government, II 190 ff
 commented upon unfavorably by Ignatyev, II 273; by Gubernatorial Commissions, II 275; and by Pahlen Commission, II 365
 Serafinovich, Jewish convert, upholds blood accusation, I 173 f
 Serfs, or Khlops, form separate estate in Poland, I 442
 S's. of Ukraina, resent Polish rule, I 140
 Jews in Ukraina mediators between pans and, I 142
 S's. of Ukraina rise against Poles and Jews, I 182

- conversion of Jews into, rejected by Polish Diet, I 170
 subjection of Jews to serfdom not recognized by Russian Senate, I 328
Sergius, grand duke, appointed governor-general of Moscow, II 400 f
 entrance into Moscow of, preceded by expulsion of Jews, II
 closes Moscow synagogue, II 423 f
 refuses petition of Jews to reopen it, III 12 f
 assassinated, III 110
Serra, papal nuncio, skeptical towards Frankists, I 216
Servia instructed by Berlin Congress to grant equality to Jews, II 202
Service, Military, see Military service
Sevastopol (Crimea), ancient Jewish Community in neighborhood of, I 17
 Jews expelled from (1829), II 32
 barred to Jews (1835), II 40
 reopened to Jews by Alexander II., II 172
 thousands of Jewish soldiers fall at (in Crimean War), II 149
 consumptive Jewish student marched through streets of, III 19
Sever, Slav tribe, subject to Khazars, I 26
Sforza, see Bona Sforza
Shaftsbury, Earl of, addresses Mansion House meeting in London on behalf of Russian Jews, II 288
Shakhna, see Shalom Shakhna
Shaizari, Ash-, Arabic writer, quoted, I 23
Shak, see Cohen, Sabbatai
Shalom Aleichem (S. Rabinovitz), editor of *Jüdische Volksbibliothek*, III 59
 Yiddish writer, III 62
Shalom Shakhna, rabbi of Lublin and Little Poland, I 105, 109
 pioneer of Talmud study in Poland, I 122 f
 rabbinical conferences initiated by, I 123
 responsa of, I 123
Shamir-Khan-Shur, city in Caucasus, I 26
Shantung Peninsula, see Kuantung
Shapiro, Samuel Abba and Phinehas, Russian-Jewish printers, II 123 f
Shargorod (Volhynia), Jacob Joseph Cohen, rabbi of, I 227, 230
 "Shabsitzvinnikes," nickname for adherents of Sabbatai Zevi, I 210

- Shaving of heads by Jewish women forbidden by Nicholas I.** (1852), II 144
- Shchebreshin** (*Polish*, Szczebrzeszyn), Meir, Hebrew author, native of, I 158
- Shchedrin-Saltykov**, Russian satirist, protests against persecution of Jews, II 325 f
denounces *Novoye Vremya*, I 380
- Shcheglovitov**, anti-Semitic Minister of Justice, secures pardon for pogrom makers, III 150
engineers Beilis case, III 165
St. Petersburg Bar Association protests against, III 166
- "Shebsen,"** nickname for adherents of Sabbatai Zevi, I 211
- Shedletz** (*Polish*, Siedlce), Judah Hasid, native of, I 208
Lukov, in province of, I 287
- Sheitel**, Jewish name for wig, II 144
- Shekel**, societies of Sh. prayers organized by Zionists, III 45
- Shidlovitz** (*Polish*, Szydłowiec), near Radom, Poland, home of Judah Hasid, I 208
- Shishkov**, Minister of Public Instruction, advocates abolition of institution of Jewish deputies, I 395
- I. B. Levinsohn applies for subsidy to, II 129
- Shklov**, rabbis assembled at, condemn Shneur Zalman, I 238
Dyerkhavin sent to, in response to complaints of Jews, I 328
- Shklover**, Borukh, see Borukh Shklover
- Shklover**, Nota, of St. Petersburg (family name Notkin), I 338
purveyor to Potemkin's army, I 330
proposes establishment of Jewish colonies near Black Sea, I 331
participates in work of Jewish Government Commission, I 338
- Shlakhovski**, Baruch, killed in pogrom, II 303
- Shlakhta** (*Polish*, Szlachta: Polish nobility), term explained, I 58
forms separate estate, I 44
growing influence of, I 58
favors Jews on account of financial advantages, I 69
controls diets, I 77
attitude of, towards Jews, I 77
granted jurisdiction over Jews of its estates, I 84
elects kings, I 89
usurps power, I 91 ff
resorts to services of Jews, I 93
represented among sect of Socinians, I 91
acts contemptuously towards serfs in Ukraina, I 141 f

- surrenders cities to Swedes, I 155
- diets, controlled by clergy and S., impose restrictions on, I 160
- oppresses Jewish arendars, I 170
- tries to turn Jews into serfs, I 170
- forces kings to impose restrictions on Jews, I 181 f
- exterminated in Ukraina, I 183 ff
- Kahals warn Jews against acting as stewards of, I 188
- controls Quadrennial Diet, I 278
- bars Jews from buying crown lands, I 296
- Jews forbidden to acquire estates of (1808), I 300
- proposes anti-Jewish restrictions to Russian Government, I 322 ff, 324 ff
- hypocrisy of, exposed by Polish writer, II 98
- Shleshkovski, Polish physician, attacks Jewish physicians in Poland in anti-Semitic pamphlet, I 96
- Shlieferman, Jewish soldier in Saratov, accused of ritual murder, II 151
- sentenced to penal servitude, II 152
- Shmakov, anti-Semitic lawyer, defends Krushevan, III 82
- appears in Beilis case, III 82
- acts as counsel for Kishinev rioters, III 91 f
- Shmerling, of Moghilev, dies while attending Jewish Conference in St. Petersburg, II 304
- Shneor Zalman, founder of "rational Hasidism," or *Habad*, I 234
- resides at Ladi (government of Moghilev), I 234, II 117
- moves to Lozno (government of Moghilev), I 234, II 117, 330
- favors Russian arms in Franco-Russian War, I 356 f
- establishes hasidic center in White Russia, I 372
- arouses ire of Vilna Gaon, I 374
- denounced to Russian Government, I 376
- dispatched as prisoner to St. Petersburg and liberated by Paul I., I 376
- dispatched again to St. Petersburg and liberated by Alexander I., I 378
- author of philosophic work entitled *Tanyo*, I 374
- philosophy of, I 381 f
- rejects *Tzaddik* cult, I 382
- Mendel, grandson of, II 57
- successors of, II 117 f
- See Shneorsohn
- Shneor, Hebrew poet, III 162

Shneerson, Mendel, leader of White Russian Hasidim, II 57
 establishes residence at Lubavichi, II 117
 member of Rabbinical Commission, II 118
 forced to approve Mendelssohn's Bible translation, II 118
 rejects innovations in Jewish education, II 118 f
Shpola (government of Kiev), pogrom at, III 33
Shtadlan, representative of Jews before Government, term explained, I 111
 officially designated in Poland as "general syndic," I 111, 160
 appointed by Council of Four Lands, I 111, 193
 secures ratification of Jewish privileges, I 160
 presents applications of Polish Jews to King Sobieski, I 167
Shtar Isko, rabbinical form of promissory note, term explained, I 350
Shtiblach, name for hasidic houses of prayer, II 124
Shulhan Arukh, rabbinical code of law, composed by Joseph Caro, I 123
 arrangement of, I 128

supplemented by Isserles, I 124
 criticised by Solomon Luria, I 125
 rivalled by code of Mordecai Jaffe, I 127 f
 Polish rabbis write commentaries on, I 128, 130, 200
 firmly established in Poland, I 130
 amplified by Gaon in Vilna, I 236
Siberia, Jewish prisoners in Russo-Polish War deported to (1654), I 245
 "Judaizing" sectarians deported to, I 402 ff
 Jewish juvenile recruits, or cantonists, sent to, II 24
 failure of Courland Jews to leave province punished by deportation to, II 34
 colonization of Jews in, started by Government (1836); and stopped (1837), II 71
 swamps of, considered for Jewish settlement (1882), II 285
 accusers of Jews, in ritual murder trial of Velizh, deported to (1835), II 82
 accused Jews of Novoya Ushitza (Podolia) deported to (1836), II 85
 Jewish printers of Slavuta (Volhynia) deported to, II 123

- revolutionaries exiled to, II 243
 Jewish revolutionaries exiled to, II 224
 governors granted right of deportation to, II 246
 criminals sentenced to deportation to, placed in transportation prisons, II 403
 "aliens" (semi-savage tribes) in, placed on level with Jews, II 367
 Jews of, denied right of movement, III 21 f
 Jewish recruits dispatched to, III 94
 Sicilist, vulgar pronunciation for Socialist, III 116
 Sigismund (*Polish*, Zygmunt), I., king of Poland and duke of Lithuania (1606-1548), favorable to Jews, I 71 f
 appoints Jewish tax-farmers in Lithuania, I 72
 warns authorities of Posen to respect Jewish privileges, I 74
 forbids Jews of Posen to keep stores on market-place, I 74; and restricts Jews of Posen to separate quarters, I 75
 restricts Jews of Lemberg in pursuit of commerce, I 75
 prevents anti-Jewish riot in Cracow, I 76
 wife of, accepts bribes from Jews, I 76
 appoints commission to investigate charges against Jews of Lithuania, I 80
 exonerates Lithuanian Jews, I 81
 places Jews on estates under jurisdiction of nobles, I 84
 appoints Michael Yosefovich "senior," or chief rabbi of Lithuanian Jews, I 72 f, 104
 confirms election of other chief rabbis, I 104 f, 122
 confers large powers on rabbis, I 73, 104 f
 rabbinical conferences meet during reign of, I 109 f
 kindness of, to Jews commented upon by Polish writer, II 98
 Sigismund (*Polish*, Zygmunt) II. Augustus, king of Poland (1548-1572), ratifies Jewish privileges, I 83
 enlarges and establishes Jewish autonomy, I 83
 places Jews on estates under jurisdiction of nobles, I 84
 endeavors to stop execution of Jews accused of host desecration, I 86 f
 forbids ritual murder and host trials, I 88
 bestows on Jews of Great Poland charter of autonomy (1551), I 105 ff

- confers on Jews right of establishing *yeshibahs*, and bestows large powers on presidents of *yeshibahs*, I 115
- grants Jews of Cracow monopoly of importing Hebrew books, I 131
- attended by Jewish body physician, I 132
- writes to Ivan the Terrible demanding admission of Jews to Russia, I 243
- last king of Yaguello dynasty, I 88
- Sigismund** (*Polish*, Zygmunt) III., king of Poland (1588-1632), I 91
- ratifies Jewish privileges, I 93
- protects Jews against magistracies, I 94
- reaction against "Arian" heresy during reign of, I 91
- requires consent of clergy for erection of synagogues, I 98
- attended by Jewish court physician, I 136
- Silesia**, Jews fleeing from Crusades seek shelter in, I 41
- Jews own estates in, I 42
- John Casimir, king of Poland, flees to, I 155
- Solomon Maimon ends days in, I 240
- Simferopol** (government of Tavrída), pogrom at, checked (April, 1905), III 115
- pogrom at (October, 1905), III 128
- Simeon Volfovich**, see Volfovich
- Simon**, of Trent, alleged victim of ritual murder, I 179
- Simon**, Sir John, interpellates Gladstone concerning Russian Jews, II 291
- Simon**, Leon, quoted, III 51, 60
- Sion** ("Zion"), Jewish periodical in Russian, II 218, 220
- Sipyaghin**, Russian Minister of Interior, pursues reactionary policy, III 16
- assassinated, III 66
- Sirkis**, Joel, called *Bah*, Polish rabbi and Talmudist, I 130, 206
- opposed to philosophy, I 133
- Sittenfeld**, manager of secular Jewish school in Odessa, II 133
- Skarga**, Peter, leading Jesuit in Poland, I 90
- Skharia** (Zechariah) converts Russian priests to Judaism, I 36
- Skvir** (government of Kiev), hasidic center, II 120
- Slaves**, manumission of, among Jews of ancient Crimea, I 15 f
- Slavium**, Slav tribe, tributary to Khazars, I 26
- Slavs**, the, tributary to Khazars, I 26
- treated tolerantly by Khazars, I 22
- throw off Khazar yoke, I 28
- German Jews visit lands of, I 33, 39

- Slavuta** (Volhynia), Jewish printing-press in, II 42 f, 123
- Slisberg, G.**, counsel for Jewish victims of Homel pogrom, III 102
- members of Central Committee of League for Equal Rights, III 112
- Sloboda**, older name for government of Kharkov, I 251
- Slutzk**, Jewish community of, represented on Lithuanian *Waad*, I 112
- Smith, Charles Emory**, United States Minister at St. Petersburg, II 395 f
- Smolensk**, Polish king appoints Jewish convert *starosta* of, I 73
- visited by Jewish merchants of Poland and Lithuania, I 242
- colony of White Russian Jews in, I 249
- Borukh Leibov**, resident of, converts captain of navy to Judaism, I 249, 251
- visited by Jewish merchants of White Russia, I 315 f; but Jews barred from settling in, I 316
- anti-Semitic play produced in, III 38
- Smolenskin, Perez**, editor of *ha-Shahar*, II 213, 234
- Hebrew writer, II 234 ff
- theory of Judaism by, II 235 f
- joins "Love of Zion" movement, II 232
- Smorgoni or Smorgon** (government of Vilna), home of Menashe Ilyer, II 114
- Jewish labor movement in, III 55
- Smyela** (government of Kiev), pogrom at (1881), II 256; (1904), III 99
- Smyrna, Asia Minor**, Sabbatai Zevi appears in, I 205
- center of Sabbatian movement, I 206
- Sobieski**, king of Poland (1674-1696), protects Jews, I 165 f
- enlarges autonomy of Jews, I 166
- rebuked by Polish diet for protection of Jews, I 167
- protects Jewish tax-farmer Bezalel, I 167
- upholds authority of *Waads*, I 194
- Socialism** (and Socialists), in Russia, propaganda of, in Hebrew, II 223 f
- rise of, among Jews, III 55 ff
- championed by "League of Jewish Workingmen" ("Bund"), III 56
- combined with Zionism by *Poale Zion*, III 57, 145
- represented in Russia by Social-Democrats and Social Revolutionaries, III 66, 119
- Jews active in both wings of, III 67
- extreme wing of, resorts to terrorism, III 66, 109 f

- Socialists and Zionists organize self-defence at Homel, II 87
- spread of, among Jews blamed for pogroms, III 89
- gains in Second Duma, III 142
- loses in Third Duma, III 153
- Jewish socialists refuse co-operation with other Jewish parties, III 144
- socialistic factions among Jews, III 145
- socialistic candidate elected in Warsaw with help of Jews, III 167
- See Bund and Revolutionary Movement
- Society of Israelitish Christians**, designed for conversion of Jews, I 396, II 74
- Alexander I. looked to, for solution of Jewish problem, I 399
- endeavors of, futile, I 400
- disbandment of, recommended by Golitzin (1824), I 400
- disbanded (1833), I 400
- Society for Diffusion of Enlightenment** established in St. Petersburg (1867), II 214 f
- branch of, established in Odessa, II 215 f
- accused by Brafman of forming part of World Kahal, II 316
- employs J. L. Gordon as secretary, II 229
- adopts resolution demanding constitution for Russia, III 111
- creates new type of Jewish school, III 160
- Society for Granting Assistance to Jewish Colonists and Artisans in Syria and Palestine** legalized by Russian Government (1891), II 421 f
- Socinians, the, Christian rationalistic sect in Poland, I 91, 136
- Socinus, Faustus, founder of Socinian sect, I 91
- Sokhachev, host trial in, I 86 f
- Jews of, display Polish patriotism, I 292
- Sokolov, Russian lawyer, acts as council for Jewish victims of Kishinev pogrom, III 91; and of Homel pogrom, III 102
- Sokolow, Nahum, editor of *hah-Tzefirah*, III 60
- joins political Zionism, III 60
- Soldiers, Jewish, refused right of universal residence by Alexander II., II 171
- permitted to remain in St. Petersburg, II 172
- forbidden to return to native villages, II 384
- forbidden to remain in Moscow, II 404
- forbidden to spend furlough outside of Pale, III 21

- stationed in Siberia, III 94
 families of, expelled, III 95
 forbidden to reside in Port Arthur, III 157
 Russian S's. make pogroms, III 100 f
 See Conscription, Military Service, "Nicholas Soldiers," and Recruiting
- Solkhat** (now Eski Krym, Crimea), ancient capital of Tatar Khans, Jewish communities in, I 34 f
- Solomon** (Shelomo), of Karlin, hasidic leader, I 372
- Solomon**, of Lemberg, recognized by Polish king as *Rosh-Yeshibah*, I 115
- Solomon Ephraim**, of Lenchytas, criticises system of Jewish education in Poland, I 119 f
- Solovaychik**, editor of *Sion*, II 220
- Solovyov, Vladimir**, Russian historian, quoted, I 247
 collects signatures for public protest against persecution of Jews, II 386 ff
 appeals to Alexander III, on behalf of Jews, II 388
- Sonnenberg, Sundel**, of Grodno, represents Jews at Russian army headquarters, I 358
 acts as deputy of Russian Jews in St. Petersburg, I 392 ff
- deprived of office, I 395
 active against ritual murder libel, II 74, 99
- South** (and South-west), of Russia, forms part of Palestine (1835), II 342
 Max Lilienthal tours through, II 56
 represented on Rabbinical Commission, II 57
 Tzaddiks in, II 119 ff
 Jewish writers in Russian language hail from, II 238
 pogroms in, II 267 f, 209, 258 f, III 99 ff
 emigration from, II 297 f
 agricultural colonies in, III 24; see Agriculture; see also North-west and Russia, White
- Spain**, Caliphate of Cordova in, I 24
 epistle of king of Khazars arrives in, I 27
 Jewish physicians in Poland natives of, I 131
 offers shelter to Russian Jews, II 268
- Spector, Isaac Elhanan**, rabbi of Kovno, attends Jewish Conference in St. Petersburg, II 304
- Spektor**, editor of Yiddish magazine, III 59
- Spencer, Herbert**, influences Russian-Jewish *intelligenzia*, II 209

Speranski, Russian statesman, recommends liberal policy towards Jews, I 399 ff
 Statute of 1804 contravenes policy of, I 345
 Spiessruten (running the gauntlet), term explained, II 85
 applied as punishment, II 85, 123
 abolished in 1863, II 85
 Spira, Nathan, Cabalist, I 135
 Spiritual Biblical Brotherhood, Jewish reform sect in Yelisevograd, II 333 f
 St. Bartholomew Night, I 89
 St. Petersburg, capital of Russia, Jewish financial agents admitted by Peter the Great to, I 248
 Borukh and Vornitzin tried at, and burned, I 252 f
 delegates of Gubernatorial Kahals assembled at (1803), I 337, 386
 beginnings of Jewish community in, I 337 f
 Committee for Jewish Affairs appointed in (1809), I 352
 Finkelstein, delegate of Moghilev Jews, proceeds to, I 363
 Shneur Zalman arrested and dispatched to, I 376, 378
 Deputies of Jewish People reside in, I 393 f; II 74
 temporary residence in, permitted to Jewish merchants (1835), II 40

Jews illegally residing in, severely punished, II 42
 "harmful" Hebrew books ordered sent to, II 43
 Max Lilienthal invited to, II 53
 Rabbinical Commission summoned to, II 56, 118
 influential Jews of Western Europe invited to, II 67
 visited by Moses Montefiore, II 68
 visited by Altaras of Marseilles, II 69
 Congregation Board of Warsaw sends deputation to, II 110
 Baron Joseph Günzburg presides over Jewish community of, II 152
 influential Jews of, apply for equal rights, II 159 f
 Jewish physicians barred from, II 167
 Jewish soldiers in body-guard of, permitted to remain in, II 172
 Lutostanski, accuser of Jews, welcomed in, II 203
Illustratzia, Russian magazine in, attacks Jews, II 207 f
 Jewish intellectuals in, II 214
 Society for Diffusion of Enlightenment established in, II 214 f
 Russian-Jewish press in St. Petersburg, II 221, 332 f, 59, III 77, 162

- Yiddish press in, III 59, 162
 Hebrew press in, see *ha-Melitz*
 Alexander II. assassinated in, III 243
 governor of, granted wide discretionary powers, II 246
 emissaries from, prepare pogroms in South, II 248
 Jewish community of, presided over by Baron Horace Günzburg, II 260
 English Jew expelled from, II 262
 Jews of, forbidden to collect pogrom fund, II 263
 Conference of Jewish Notables in (1881), II 277; (1882), II 299, 304 ff
 Jewish demonstration against pogroms in, II 286
 Dr. Drabkin, rabbi of, interviews Ignatyev, II 305
 Jews of Balta, send deputation to, II 316 f
 Jews expelled from, II 319
 Jews of, persecuted by Gresser, city-governor, II 343 ff, 397 f
 admission of Jews to educational institutions of, limited to 3%, II 350, III 158
 Jews prominent at bar of, II 352
 Jewish notables of, consulted by Pahlen Commission, II 369 f
- British ambassador at, assured of discontinuation of Jewish persecutions, II 382
 Jews of, harassed anew, II 385
 Solovyov collects signatures for public protest against Jewish persecutions in, II 387
 petition of Guildhall meeting in London sent to, II 392
 American Minister at, instructed to exert influence on behalf of Jews, II 395
Russkaya Zhizn ("Russian Life"), paper in, depicts Jewish sufferings, II 397
Novosti ("The News"), paper in, confiscated for defending Jews, II 407
 expulsion of all Jews from, contemplated, II 410 f
 visited by White, representative of Baron Hirsch, II 416 f, 419
 Central Committee of Jewish Colonization Association established in, II 420
 Jewish Colonization Association sends deputation to, III 10
 Jews of, submit memorandum to Government, III 11
 Jews of, ask permission to acquire land for agriculture, III 24

new educational restrictions in, III 30

"Smugglers," anti-Semitic play, produced in, III 38

Znamya ("The Banner"), anti-Semitic paper, appears in, III 70

Levendahl, Government agent dispatched from, to arrange pogroms, III 71

visited by Dr. Herzl, III 89

American ambassadors in, reported to have protested against persecution, III 96

Plehve assassinated in, III 97

Conference of Zemstvo workers in, opposes autocracy (1904), III 105

"Bloody Sunday" in, III 106

Jewish community of, signs petition for equal rights, III 108

Society for Diffusion of Enlightenment in, demands constitution for Russia, III 111

League for Equal Rights establishes central bureau in, III 112

Jewish community of, protests against denial of Jewish franchise, III 121

Bogdanovich, general in, assists October pogroms, III 125

League for Equal Rights holds convention in, III 131

Jewish parties form permanent council in, III 148

Jewish Literary Society founded in, III 160 f

Bar Association of, protests against Beilis trial, III 166

Natives and residents of:

J. L. Gordon, Hebrew poet, II 229

Nyevakhovich, convert, Russian poet, I 386 f

Abraham Peretz, Jewish merchant (convert), I 338, 386, 412

Antonio Sanchez, court physician, I 258

Nota Shklover, Jewish merchant, I 330

St. Petersburg (government), Jews expelled from villages of, I 409

Localities in:

Luga, I 409

Schlüsselburg, II 97

Stage, Russian, anti-Semitism on, III 38 f

Stanislav Augustus Poniatovski, see Poniatovski

Staro-Constantinov, see Constantinov

Starodub (government of Chernigov), Cossack massacre at (1648), I 149

pogrom at (1891), II 411 f

Starosta, high Polish office, name explained, I 60

- encroaches on duties of voyevoda, I 46
- Lithuanian Jews subject to jurisdiction of, I 60, 94, 104
- S. of Sokhachev ordered by king to stop execution of Jews, I 86
- S. of Brest supports Kahal, I 190
- S. of Kaniev makes sport of Jews, I 169 f
- S's. administer Ukraina, I 142
- S's. begin to oppress Jews, I 169
- determines extent of Jewish autonomy, I 191
- Stashitz (*Polish*, Stashyc), Polish priest and statesman, anti-Semitic author, I 281 f, II 95 f
- opposes plan of reform favorable to Jews, II 93
- Statistics, of Jews, in Poland, I 66, 187, 263 f, 390
- in Russia, II 341, 415
- in White Russia, I 307
- in Pale, II 168
- of Jewish first-guild merchants in Pale, II 162
- of Jewish artisans in Pale, II 168
- of Jewish economic activity in Russian South-west, II 194
- of Jews in agrarian pursuits, III 24
- of Jewish recruits, II 355 f
- of Jewish physicians in Russian army, III 95
- of Jewish pauperism, III 23 f
- of Jews expelled from Russia, I 254, 258
- of Jewish emigration to United States, II 373, 421, III 148
- of Jewish emigration to Argentina, II 419
- Statute, "Lithuanian S." (1566), I 87
- "S. concerning the Organization of the Jews" (1804), I 342 ff; criticized by Jewish representatives, I 349 ff
- "S. of Conscription and Military Service" (1827), II 18 ff, 29; extended to Poland (1843), II 109; leaves inner life of Jews unchanged, II 48
- Military S. (1874), II 199 ff, 355
- "S. on the Jews" (1835), II 28, 33, 34 ff, 39 ff; fixes age of marriage, II 112; fails to assimilate Jews, II 47
- "S. concerning Zemstvos Organizations" (1864), admits Jews to local self-government, II 173
- "S. concerning Zemstvos Organizations" (1890) bars Jews from local self-government, II 385 f

- Municipal S. (1870) limits admission of Jews to one-third and bars Jews from office of burgomaster, II 198 f
- "S. concerning Enforced Public Safety" (1881), II 246
- See Charter
- Stavropol (government), nomads of, placed on level with Jews, II 367
- Stephen Batory, see Batory
- Stern, Abraham, Jewish scholar and mathematician in Warsaw, II 103
- Stern, Bezalel, principal of modern Jewish school in Odessa, II 57, 133
- Stillman, Jewish workingman, fires at Odessa Chief of Police, III 107
- Stolypin, Russian Minister of Interior, answers interpellation concerning pogroms, III 136, 138
- appointed Prime Minister, III 138, 140
- attacked by terrorist, III 140
- promises mitigation of Jewish disabilities, III 141
- controlled by League of Russian People, III 151
- excludes Jewish students from Kiev Polytechnicum, III 152
- stops expulsion of Jews from Interior, III 154
- becomes more reactionary, III 156 f
- determines to uproot alien cultures in Russia, III 159 f
- assassinated at Kiev, III 164
- Strakhov, Russian official entrusted with conduct of Velizh ritual murder case, II 76 ff
- Strashun, Mattathiah, Talmudist and Maskil in Vilna, II 136
- Strelnikov, Russian public prosecutor, calls upon Jews to leave Russia, II 264 f
- Strigolnik, Carp, founder of Strigolniki sect, I 36
- Strikes, adopted as revolutionary weapon, III 125 f
- arranged by "Bund," III 130
- Stroganov, Russian Minister of Interior, advocates liberal attitude towards Jews, II 47
- Stroganov, Count, governor-general of New Russia, advocates emancipation of Jews, II 168 f
- Studzinski, alleged victim of ritual murder, I 178 f
- Stundists, the, rationalistic Christian sect in Russia, II 333
- Jacob Gordin influenced by, II 333
- Stupnitz, near Pshemysl (Galicia), ritual murder libel at, I 178

- Sub-Starosta**, Polish official, Jews subject to jurisdiction of, I 60; see **Starosta**
- Subbotin**, Russian economist, points out pauperism in Pale, III 23
- Sudak**, locality in Crimea, subject to Khazars, I 26
- Sugdaz**, locality in Crimea, subject to Khazars, I 26
- Summer Resorts**, Jews barred from, III 18 f
bill admitting Jews to, rejected, III 154
Jews expelled from, III 157
See **Residence**, Right of
- Superstition** rampant in Poland, I 203 f
- Supreme Secret Council**, official body in Russia (18th century), I 249 f
- Surgeons**, see **Physicians**
- Suvar**, Slav tribe, subject to Khazars, I 26
- Suvarov**, Russian general, attacks Praga, suburb of Warsaw, I 296
- Suvorin**, editor of *Novoye Vremya*, II 380
produces anti-Semitic play, III 38
- Svyatopolk II.**, prince of Kiev (1093-1113), favors Jews, I 32
- Svyatopolk-Mirski**, governor-general of Vilna and later Russian Minister of Interior, pursues liberal policy, III 99, 105
dismissed, III 107
- Svyatoslav**, prince of Kiev, defeats Khazars, I 28
- Swedes**, the, invade Poland, I 154 ff
- Switzerland**, Zionist Congresses held in, III 44
- Syech**, name of Cossack Republic, I 143
- Syedletz** (*Polish*, Siedlce), pogroms at (1905), III 119, 140 f
- Syn Otyechestva** ("Son of the Fatherland"), Russian magazine, protests against pogroms, III 35
- Synagogue**, in Bosporus, I 15 f
erection of, in Poland, requires royal permission, I 98
building of new S's., in Poland, forbidden (1720), I 171
erection of, near church in Russia, forbidden (1835), II 41
- S's. in Moscow closed, II 397
- Great S. of Moscow closed, II 423 ff, III 12
- Jews fight for preservation of Moscow S., III 12 ff
- Synhedrion**, convoked by Napoleon, I 298, 351
convocation of, viewed with suspicion by Austria and Russia, I 346 ff

- represented by Russian Government both as anti-Jewish and anti-Christian, I 348
- influences Jews of Warsaw, I 386
- fatal error of, in denying Jewish nationality, III 53
- creation of, in Russia, advocated by Dyerzhavin, I 333
- convocation of, in Russia suggested by Pestel, Russian revolutionary, I 412
- Synod, the, see Church Council
- Synod, Holy, in Russia, issues circular against Napoleon, I 348
- deals severely with "Judaizers," I 402 f
- appoints Brafman, Jewish informer, instructor of Hebrew, II 187
- presided over by Pobyedonostzev, II 245; III 9 f
- Syria, emigration of Jews from, to Tauris, I 16
- Taganrog (government of Yekaterinoslav), excluded from Pale, II 346
- Talmud, the, studied by Khazars, I 21
- study of, pursued by early Russian Jews in Germany, I 33
- predominant factor in Jewish education, I 114 ff
- study of, stimulated by Jewish autonomy, I 121 ff
- reigns supreme in Russia and Poland, I 195, 221, 264, 198 ff, 380, II 51
- rejected by Frankists, I 214 f
- burned at Kamenetz-Podolsk, I 215
- importance of study of, minimized by Besht, founder of Hasidism, I 224 ff
- arrogance of students of, attacked by Besht's disciple, I 230
- neglected by Hasidim, I 235
- burning of, recommended by Polish reformers, I 282
- opposed by Frank of Kreslavka, Jewish Mendelssohnian, I 331
- regarded by Russian Council of State as source of Jewish suffering, II 47
- accused by Uvarov of demoralizing Jews, II 51
- weakening and uprooting of, aimed at by Nicholas I., II 58, 66
- criticised by David Friedländer, II 90
- assailed by Abbé Chiarini in Warsaw, II 104
- defended by I. B. Levinsohn, II 131
- injuriousness of, emphasized by Russian Commission, II 195

- attacked by Lutostanski, II 204
 conceived by Lilienblum as
 factor in Jewish reform, II 236
 attacked by Gubernatorial
 Commissions, II 275
 rejected by New Israel Sect, II
 334
Talmud Torah, Jewish public
 school in Poland, I 114, 118
 maintained by Waads, I 195
 in Moscow, placed in Syna-
 gogue, III 13
Talno (government of Kiev), ha-
 sidic center, II 120
Taman Peninsula, Greek city-
 republic on, I 14
 Samkers, Jewish city on, I 23
 owned by Guizolfi, Italian Jew,
 I 36
Tannaim, names of, collected by
 Polish rabbi, I 200
Tanyo, philosophic work by
 Shneur Zalman, I 372, II 117
Tarashkevich, anti-Semitic priest
 in Velizh, II 77
Targovitz (*Polish*, Targowica),
 confederacy of, between Rus-
 sians and Poles (1792), I
 292
Tarku (Semender), Caucasian
 city, subject to Khazars, I 26
Tarnopol (Galicia), Meir of, He-
 brew author, I 201
Tarsus (Asia Minor), Jewish
 community in, I 14
Tatars, the, Russia under do-
 minion of, I 29
 conquer Crimea, I 33
 Jews of Crimea under rule of,
 I 34 ff
 T. of Lemberg granted auto-
 nomy by Casimir the Great,
 I 53
 barred from office and from
 keeping Christian domestics
 in Lithuania, I 87
 invade Polish border provinces
 and combated by Cossacks,
 I 142 f
 form alliance with Cossacks
 under Khmelnitzki, I 144 ff,
 150
 spare Jewish prisoners, I 145,
 157, 205
 take Jews of Polonnoye cap-
 tive, I 148
 cause spread of Mohammedan-
 ism, I 254
Tauri, or **Taurians**, tribe, I 13 ff
Taurian Bosphorus, see Kerch
Taurian Chersonesus, see Bos-
 porus
Tauris, northern shores of Black
 Sea, I 13
 immigration of Jews into, I 13 ff
 Khazars move towards, I 19
 bishops of, try to proselytize
 Khazars, I 20
 remnant of **Khazar kingdom**
 in, I 28
 ruled by Pechenegs and Po-
 lovtzis, I 29
 retains name Khazaria, I 29
 in relations with Kiev, I 33 ff

Tavrida (region, or government), extent of, I 13
 Jews permitted to settle in (1791), I 316 f
 Karaites settled in, I 318
 included in Pale (1835), II 40, 428
 pogroms in, III 115, 120, 128
 Cities in:
 Kerch, III 115, 120
 Melitopol, III 115
 Simferopol, III 115, 128
 Mylta, II 428 f
Tax, under Polish régime, paid by Jews to Church, I 57 f
 paid by Jews to Catholic academies (called *Kozubales*), I 161, 166
 Polish king conditions protection to Jews on payment of, I 84
 collected by Jews on estates of *Shlakhta*, I 93
 apportioned by Waads and collected by *Kahals*, I 107, 181, 189 f, 197 f
 Council of Four Lands declines responsibility for collection of, I 194
 increased (1717), I 169
 changed into individual T. of two gulden per head (1764), I 197
 raised to three gulden per head (1775), I 267

disproportionately assessed by *Kahals*, I 275
 Jews of Minsk complain about abuses in collection of, I 275
 paid on taking possession of real estate, I 190
 paid for right of sojourn in Warsaw, I 269, II 95
 imposed on Jews in lieu of conscription (1817), I 95; (1831), I 107
Tax, under Russian régime, per capita T. of one rubel imposed on Jews of White Russia (1772), I 307
Kahals of White Russia charged with collection of, I 309
 Jews of annexed Polish provinces required to pay double T. (1794), I 318
 payment of double T. confirmed by Paul I., I 321
 Karaites relieved from payment of double T., I 318
 payment of double T. by Jews commented upon by "Jewish Committee" (1804), I 341
 manufacturers and artisans relieved from payment of double T. (1804), I 344
 Jewish deputies plead for abolition of double T., I 349
Kahals in Courland organized for collection of, I 321

- estates, subject to payment of (so-called taxable estates), hindered in right of transit, I 322
- alleviations in payment of, promised to converts, I 397
- in lieu of conscription, I 318; II 15, 20
- irregularity in payment of, punished by conscription, II 19
- modification in payment of, suggested by Council of State, II 49
- Kahals limited to conscription and collection of (1844), I 60
- revenue from meat or basket T., called *Korobka*, placed under control of Russian authorities (1844), I 61
- "auxiliary basket T." (on immovable property, etc.), instituted, II 61
- levied on Sabbath candles for maintenance of Crown schools, I 61 f
- levied on traditional Jewish dress in Russia (1843), II 110; extended to Poland, I 110, 144
- T. on passports waived in case of Jewish immigrants, I 418, 420
- basket T. represented as Jewish system of finance, II 194
- abuses of basket T. depicted by Mendele Mokher Sforim, II 232
- Pahlen Commission inquires about purposes of basket T., II 370
- use of basket T. for defraying emigration suggested by Russian official, II 420
- basket and candle T. for non-Jewish purposes, II 426 f
- basket T. used to defray night raids upon Jews, III 20
- Tax Farming (and Tax Farmers)**, Jews engage in, in Poland, I 44, 67, 69, 71
- in Lithuania, I 60, 65
- forbidden by Church Councils, I 49
- opposed by petty Shlakhta, I 77
- forbidden by Piotrkov Diet of 1538, I 77 f
- Shlakhta forces king to bar Jews from, I 182
- law barring Jews from, upheld by rabbis, I 110
- Kahals call upon Jews to refrain from, I 188
- Jews from White Russia engage in, in Smolensk, I 249
- class of Jewish tax farmers in Russia, II 72
- Individual tax farmers:**
- Bezalel, I 167
- Borukh Leibov, I 249

- Abraham and Michael Yosefovich, I 73
 Yosko, I 71
 Saul Yudich, I 94
 Teachers, Jewish, see Heder and School
 "Temporary Rules" of May 3, 1882, known as May Laws, genesis of, II 309 ff
 contents of, II 312
 effect of, II 318 f
 old settlers permitted to stay in villages under, II 16
 misconstrued to apply to old settlers, II 340 ff
 check agriculture among Jews, III 24 f
 Tennyson, English poet, expresses sympathy with Russian Jews, II 258
 Teplitz, T., prominent Jew of Warsaw, II 103
 Terentyeva, Mary, accuses Jews of ritual murder, II 75 ff
 exiled to Siberia for false accusation, II 82
 Territorialism accepts idea of Pinsker's *Autoemancipation*, II 332
 rise of, III 41
 born out of Zionist organization, III 185
 secedes from Zionist organization, III 144
 Terrorism, rampant under Alexander II., II 243
 favored by Social-Revolutionary party, III 66, 109 f
 Jews take small part in, III 67
 acts of, committed by Jews, III 107
 rampant in Poland and Baltic provinces (1905), III 130
 used as pretext for pogroms, III 136
 intensified after dissolution of First Duma, III 140
 Tetyev (government of Kiev), massacre at, I 184
 Teutonic Order, the, name explained, I 63
 engages in war with Poland, I 63
 Theodosia, see Kaffa
 Theodosius II., emperor of Byzantium, persecutes Jews, I 18
 Theodosius, Abbot of Kiev monastery, persecutes Jews, I 31
 Theophanes, Byzantine writer, quoted, I 18
 "Third Section," the, see Police, Political
 Thorn (*Polish*, Torun), annexed by Prussia (1793), I 292
 Tiberias (Palestine), visited by Nahman of Bratzlav, I 383
 Tiflis (Caucasia), anti-Semitic play produced at, III 38
 Tikhonovich, chief of political police in Syedletz, engineers pogrom, III 140
 thanked by governor-general of Warsaw, III 141

- Tilsit, Peace of** (1807), leads to establishment of duchy of Warsaw, I 297
- affects policy of Alexander I. towards Jews, I 350
- Tlusta** (Galicia), Besht settles in, I 223
- Tobias**, of Ruzhany, martyr, I 162 f
- Tobolsk** (government), lands in, set aside for colonization of Jews, II 71
- Toledo** (Spain), Jacob ben Asher rabbi of, I 118
- Tolstoi, Demetrius**, Minister of Interior, II 314
- adopts energetic measures against pogroms, II 315
- anti-pogrom circular of, quoted by United States Minister, II 293
- destroys plans of Pahlen Commission, II 370
- takes into consideration economic importance of Jews, II 428
- Tolstoi, Leo**, preaches "Going to the People," II 222
- keeps silent on Jewish persecutions, II 325
- preaches doctrine of non-resistance, II 371
- protests against Jewish persecutions in Russia, II 387 f
- condemns Kishinev massacre, III 76
- protests against atrocities of Russian Government, III 149
- Tomsk** (Siberia), pogrom against intellectuals at, III 128
- Tosafists**, the, name explained, I 117
- Rabbi Eliezer, of school of, quoted, I 43
- work of, studied in Poland, I 117
- method of, followed by Solomon Luria, I 125
- Totleben**, Russian governor-general of Vilna, opposes settling of Jews in villages, II 276
- checks pogroms, II 276
- Tovianski** (*Polish*, Towianski), Polish mystic, preaches union of Jews and Poles peoples, II 108
- Trades**, see Artisans
- Trade-Unions, or Trade-Guilds**, in Poland, hostile to Jews, I 70, 74
- Trans-Caspian Region**, Akhal-Tekke, oasis in, suggested for settlement of Jews, II 306
- alien tribes of, placed on level with Jews, II 367
- Transportation Prisons**, term explained, II 403
- exiled Moscow Jews placed in, II 403, 405 f

- Trepov**, Assistant-Minister of Interior, favors Jewish franchise, III 122
- Trepov**, Chief of Police, orders suppression of revolution, III 126
- Tribunal**, Crown T. in Poland, name explained, I 96
tries ritual murder cases, I 96, 100, 172 f
- Troitza Monastery**, near Moscow, II 203
- Troki** (province of Vilna), Crimean Jews settle in, I 35
Jewish community in, I 59
Karaites settle in, I 60
Jews expelled from (1495), I 65
- Troki**, Isaac, author of anti-Christian treatise, I 137 f
- Tromba**, Nicholas, archbishop of Gnesen, attends Synod of Constance and presides over Synod of Kalish, I 57
- Troyanov** (Volhynia), tragic fate of Jewish self-defence at, III 116 ff
- Trubetzkoj**, Russian commissioner, exonerates Jews of Mstislavl, II 87
- Trubetzkoj**, professor, head of delegation to Nicholas II., III 122
- Trudoviki** ("Laborites"), Bramson, Jewish member of, III 134
lose in Third Duma, III 153
- Tsushima**, Russian fleet destroyed by Japanese in vicinity of, III 119
- Tudela** (Spain), Benjamin of, Jewish traveller, I 32
- Tugendhold**, Jacob, Jewish assimilationist in Warsaw, II 98 f
refutes Abbé Chiarini, II 104
- Tugendhold**, Wolf, brother of former, censor in Vilna, II 136
- Tula** (government), "Judaizers" in, I 401 f
- Tulchinski**, Borukh, see Borukh of Tulchin
- Tulchyn** (Podolia), Khmelnitzki massacre at, 146 f
residence of Pestel, Russian revolutionary, II 411
- Turgay**, Territory of (Central Asia), semi-civilized tribes of, placed on level with Jews, II 367
- Turgenieff** (Turgeniev), Russian writer, II 210
influences S. J. Abramovich, II 231
keeps silent on Jewish persecutions, II 325
- Turish**, hasidic center, II 120
- Turkey**, takes over colony in Kaffa, I 34
Jewish center in, I 66
Polish Jews export goods to, I 68

- Jews of Lithuania suspected of preparing to flee to, I 51
 raided by Cossacks, I 143
 Jewish prisoners of war carried by Tatars to, I 145, 157, 205
 lays claim to Ukraina, I 159
 Sabbatai Zevi carries on propaganda in, I 205, 210
 influence of, on Polish Jewry, I 207 f
 annexes part of Podolia (1672), I 208; returns it to Poland (1699), I 208
 Jacob Frank travels about in, I 212; sent back from Poland to, I 213; returns to Poland from, I 216
 engages in war with Russia (1739), I 253 f
 establishment of Jewish State in, suggested by Russian revolutionary, I 412
 Moses Montefiore pays visit to, II 68
Bilu pioneers enter into negotiations with, II 322
 hampers Palestinian colonization, II 375, 422, III 42
 Dr. Herzl enters into negotiations with, III 45 f
 Russian Government promises to exert influence over, in favor of Zionism, II 83
 Twenty-One-Verst Zone, see Border Zone
- Twor (Central Russia), pogrom against intellectuals at, III 128
 Typography, see Printing-Press
 Tzaddik ("The Righteous Man"), title of hasidic leader, rival of rabbi, I 235
 revered by Jewish masses, I 274; II 112
 controls rabbinate in Russian South-west, I 371
 gains foothold in Lithuania, I 372
 type of, in Poland, resembles that of *Habad*, II 123
 miraculous stories about, circulate among Hasidim, II 124
 firmly entrenched, II 116 ff
 forbidden by Russian Government to travel about, II 212
 See Tzaddikism and Hasidism
 Tzaddikism (cult of *Tzaddik*), as conceived by Besht, I 227
 developed by Baer of Mezhe-rich, I 230
 practical consequences of, I 231 f
 extreme formulation of, I 232 f
 viewed with apprehension by Elijah of Vilna, I 374
 triumphant in South-west, I 381
 vulgar form of, rejected by Shneur Zalman, I 382
 degeneration of, I 382 f

- extermination of, advocated by Kalmansohn, I 385
 criticized by Pestel, Russian revolutionary, I 411
 attacked by Maskilim, II 210;
 see Tzaddik and Hasidism
 Tzarmis, Slav tribe, subject to Khazars, I 26
- Uganda (British East Africa), offered as Jewish settlement to Zionists, III 84 f
- Ukase, term explained, I 249;
 spelling of word, I 6
- Ukraina (Ukraine), name explained, I 140
 part of, called Little Russia, invaded and annexed by Russia (1654), I 153, 244 f
 divided between Poland and Russia (1667), I 159
 Jewish massacres in (1648), I 139 ff
 part of, barred to Jews (1649), I 151; reopened to Jews (1651), I 152
 Jews decimated in, I 157
 uprisings against Poles and Jews in (18th century), I 182 ff
 Jewish massacres in, stimulate propaganda of Sabbatai Zevi, I 205
 talmudic culture deteriorates in, I 199
 intellectual development of Jews in, differs from that in North-west, I 221
- character of Hasidism in, I 232, II 119 ff
 type of Tzaddik in, I 233;
 differs from that in Poland, II 123
 Tzaddik dynasty of Chernobyl widely ramified in, I 382
 Jews expelled from (1727), I 249
 transfer of Polish Jews to, suggested, I 284
 included in Pale (1794), I 317
 Galatovski, Ukrainian writer, refers to Sabbatai Zevi, I 205
 Russian revolutionaries appeal to Ukrainian people, II 274
 Ukrainian cultural institutions suppressed by Russian Government, III 160
 See Russia, Little
- Ulrich Von Hutten, epistles of, imitated in Hebrew, II 126
- Uman (*Polish*, Human, province of Kiev), massacre at, I 184
 Nahman of Bratzlav dies at, I 383
 place of pilgrimage for Bratzlav Hasidim, I 383, II 122
- Uniat Church, the, I 141
- Union of American Hebrew Congregations appeals to United States Government on behalf of Russian Jews, II 293
- "Union of Lublin" (1569), I 88
- Unitarians, the, Christian rationalistic sect in Poland, I 136

- United States of America, Max Lilienthal emigrates to, II 59
- Marcus Jastrow emigrates to, II 179
- emigration of Russian Jews to, II 268 f, 297 f, 321, 327 f, 373 ff, 421, III 104
- stirred by Warsaw pogrom, II 283
- Government of, protests against Jewish persecutions in Russia, II 292 ff, 394 ff, 408 ff
- Congress of, protests against Jewish persecutions in Russia, II 294 ff, 394
- Jewish center in, suggested as alternative by Pinsker, II 331
- Jacob Gordin settles in, II 335
- Jewish agricultural colonies in, II 374
- economic condition of Jews in, II 374
- Jewish emigrants in, said to wish for return to Russia, II 393
- Government of, sends two Commissioners to Russia, II 407
- exiled Moscow Jews emigrate to, II 413, 416
- emigration to, embodied in Jewish pogrom of Dubnow, III 54
- agitated over Kishinev massacre, III 78
- Kishinev massacre stimulates emigration to, III 85 f
- fear of new Kishinev pogrom intensifies emigration to, III 96
- ambassador of, in St. Petersburg, reported to have protested against Jewish persecutions, III 96
- emigration to, embodied in pogrom of Jewish National Party in Russia, III 147 f
- statistics of Jewish emigration to, III 148
- Hebrew writers in, III 163
- University, Polish Jews study at U. of Padua, I 132
- "Statute of 1804" admits Jews to Russian U's., I 345
- Jewish U. graduates admitted into Russian Interior and to civil service (1861), II 166; required to possess learned degree, II 165, 167; requirement dropped (1879), II 167
- Jewish U. graduates permitted to keep two Jewish servants in Russian Interior, II 166; fictitious servants of, II 344 ff
- Jews with U. education permitted to live in villages and own property (1904), III 98; privilege extended to wives and children, III 99

- Jewish U. students suspected of revolutionary leanings, II 348, III 28
- admission of Jews to, restricted (1887), II 350; placed on Statute books (1908), III 157 f
- restricted admission drives Jews into foreign U's, II 351, III 31, 158; and makes them antagonistic to Government, III 31
- restricted admission to, abolished by professional councils (1905), III 124; restored (1907), III 152; placed on Statute books (1908), III 157 f
- See Education and School
- Ural, territory of, semi-civilized tribes of placed on level with Jews, II 367
- Urussov, governor of Bessarabia, and later Assistant-Minister of Interior, favors mitigation of Jewish disabilities, III 93
- discloses personal animosity of Nicholas II. against Jews, III 93
- issues warning against pogroms, III 97
- reveals in *Memoirs* Plehve's share in pogroms, III 97
- discloses in Duma share of Russian Government in October pogroms, III 126, 138
- Ushitza, see Novaya Ushitza
- Ussishkin, Russian Zionist leader, III 47
- Ustrugov, deputy-governor of Bessarabia, persecutes Jews, III 70
- assists in arranging Kishinev massacre, VIII 71
- sued by Jews, III 92
- Uvarov, Sergius, Minister of Public Instruction, endeavors to spread enlightenment among Russian Jews, II 46 ff
- lays plans before "Jewish Committee," II 50 ff
- visits Lilienthal's school in Riga, II 52
- negotiates with Lilienthal, II 53
- instructs Lilienthal to enter into correspondence with Jewish leaders in Western Europe, II 67
- petitioned by Moses Montefiore on behalf of Russian Jews, II 68
- plans of, received favorably by Jews of Vilna, II 136 f
- See Lilienthal
- Valnyev, Minister of Interior, favors admission of Jewish artisans and mechanics into Russian Interior, II 169 f
- Vannovski, Minister of War, restricts number of Jewish surgeons in Russian army, II 319 f

- accepts post of Minister of Public Instruction and curtails admission of Jews to universities, III 29
- Varta (*Polish*, Warta), Diet of (1423), restricts commercial operations of Jews, I 58
- Varta (*Polish*, Warta), river, lands on banks of, attract Jews, I 39
- Vasa Dynasty, of Swedish origin, rules in Poland, I 91
- Vasilchikov, Count, governor-general of Kiev, favors admission of Jewish artisans into Russian Interior, II 168
- Veitelson, Marcus, Jewish deputy in St. Petersburg, I 393
- Velizh (government of Vitebsk), ritual murder trial at, II 75 ff
- Alexander I. passes through, and orders opening of case, II 76
- Jews of, acquitted, II 83
- Venentit, Slav tribe, subject to Khazars, I 26
- Venice, Jewish Palestine pilgrims from Poland pass through, I 209
- Master Leon, Russian court physician, invited from, I 37
- Victoria, Queen of England, recommends Moses Montefiore to Nicholas I., II 68
- Vienna, Jewish bankers in, petition Polish king on behalf of Posen Jews, I 176
- Jews of, assist Jewish Palestine pilgrims from Poland to reach Constantinople, I 209
- Congress of, inaugurates European reaction, I 359
- Congress of, transfers duchy of Warsaw to Russia, I 390, II 88
- Lieberman, Russian-Jewish socialist, publishes *ha-Emet* in, II 223
- Smolenskin resides in, II 234; and publishes *ha-Shahar* in, II 218
- secret circular of Plehve made known in, II 381
- Dr. Herzl resides in, III 42
- Vigdorovich, Samuel, rabbi of Vilna, engages in litigation with Kahal, I 275 f
- Vilenski Vyestnik ("The Vilna Herald"), publishes Brafman's articles against Kahal, II 189
- Vilkomir (government of Kovno), home of M. L. Lilienblum, II 236
- Villages, transfer of Jews from, to towns ordered by Catherine II. (1795), I 319
- Jews retained in, by landowners, I 323

Russian officials given wide powers in dislodging Jews from (1797), I 323 f
 expulsion of Jews from, decreed in Statute of 1804, I 343
 projected expulsion from, affects half million Jews, I 346
 expulsion checked by fear of Napoleon's invasion (1807), I 347 f
 Jewish deputies plead for repeal, or postponement of expulsion from, I 349
 expulsion of Jews from, reaffirmed (1808), I 351
 expulsion from, started, I 351
 Alexander I. admits impossibility of removing Jews from (1809), I 352
 "Jewish Committee" advises against expulsion of Jews from (1812), I 353 f
 economic importance of Jews in, I 361 f
 evil effects of endeavors to dislodge Jews from, I 362 f
 renewal of effort to remove Jews from, I 405
 Jews expelled from, in White Russia (1823), I 406 f
 uselessness of expulsion from, in White Russia pointed out by Council of State (1835), I 407 f, II 34 f

Jews expelled from, in government of Grodno (1827), II 30 f
 expulsion of Jews from, in government of Kiev, decreed (1830), II 33; delayed, II 33; objected to by Council of State and indefinitely postponed, II 35
 barred to Jews in government of Kiev and Little Russia in Statute of 1835, II 40
 barred to Jews in Fifty-Verst-Zone under same law, II 40
 Jews of Poland permitted to live in (1862), II 181, 367; permission invalidated by restriction of property rights (1891), 367
 Jews of Poland permitted to acquire land in (1862), II 172, 181; permission withdrawn as result of Polish insurrection (1864), II 173
 exclusion of Jews from, recommended by Tottleben, governor-general of Vilna, II 276
 complete elimination of Jews from, recommended by "Jewish Committee" (1882), II 310
 expulsion of old settlers objected to by Committee of Ministers, II 311

- Jews forbidden to settle anew in, and to acquire property in ("Temporary Rules" of May 3, 1882), II 312
- remain closed to Jews, II 318
- old Jewish settlers expelled from, by peasant communes, II 318 f
- peasants encouraged to expel old Jewish settlers from, II 319, 340
- Jews in, harassed by Russian officials, II 340 ff
- thousands of Jews expelled from, in governments of Chernigov and Poltava, II 341
- disabilities of Jews in, commented upon by Pahlen Commission, II 366
- discharged Jewish soldiers, being regarded as "new settlers," barred from returning to, II 384
- towns transferred into, and barred to Jews (1890), II 385; reopened to Jews (1903), III 80 f
- policy of eliminating Jews from, continued under Nicholas II., III 16 ff
- Jews dislodged from, by introduction of liquor monopoly (1894) III 23
- privileged Jews, though admitted into Interior, prohibited from acquiring property in (1903), III 81; exception made for Jews with higher education (1904), III 98
- wholesale expulsions of Jews from (1910), III 157
- See Expulsion, and Residence, Right of
- Villani, Matteo**, Italian chronicler, quoted, I 52
- Vilna** (*Polish*, Wilna, city), superseded by Warsaw as capital, I 85
- conquered by Russians (1654), I 154, 245
- surrendered by Poles, I 155
- Lithuanian Hetman resides in, I 192
- anti-Jewish riots in (under Polish Régime), I 94, 99, 161, 166; by invading Russian troops, I 245
- Jews of, permitted to engage in petty trade, I 99
- Jews of, restricted to "Jewish Street" and placed under jurisdiction of Municipal Courts (1633), I 99
- Jewish community of, represented on Lithuanian Waad, I 112
- Kahal of, engaged in litigation with rabbi of, I 275 f
- Jews of, support Polish troops fighting against Russians (1792), I 292

- Christian burghers of, protest to Alexander I., against admission of Jews to city-government (1805), I 370
- Jews of, barred from city-government in (1805), I 370
- exclusion of Jews from city-government of, confirmed in Statute of 1835, II 41
- hasidic societies secretly organized in, I 237
- visited by Shneur Zalman to request interview with Gaon, I 238
- K a h a l of, excommunicates Hasidim (1772), I 237, 371; (1796), II 371, 373
- Hasidim reside "illegally" in, I 372
- Kahal of, sends out messengers to stir up anti-hasidic agitation, I 373
- Hasidim of, rejoice over death of Gaon, I 375
- Kahal elders of, vow to avenge insult to Gaon, I 375; and denounce Hasidism to Government, I 375 f
- Hasidim arrested in, I 376
- Hasidim of, depose Kahal elders, I 377
- conference of Jewish deputies at (1815), I 393 f
- Kahal of, pleads for abolition of cantonists, II 36
- Kahal of, complains to Council of State about Jewish disabilities, II 38; and begs permission to send spokesmen to St. Petersburg, II 39
- printing-press in, II 42, 127
- censorship committee in, II 44
- visited by Max Lilienthal, II 54
- Maskilim of, promise support to Lilienthal, II 55; and form his mainstay, II 136
- Rabbinical Institute opened in (1847), II 59, 174; closed (1873), II 177; graduates of, un-Jewish, II 212
- Teachers' Institute in, II 177
- pupils of both Institutes form revolutionary circle in, II 223
- visited by Moses Montefiore, II 68
- center of Haskalah, II 132 ff
- Maskilim circle in, II 136 ff
- residential restrictions in, abolished by Alexander II., II 172
- Brafman carries on anti-Jewish agitation in, II 187 ff, 240
- pauperism among Jews of, III 24
- Blondes, Jewish barber in, accused of ritual murder, II 37
- Jewish labor movement in, III 55
- "Bund" holds convention in (1897), III 56

Lekkert, Jewish workingman in, assails governor of Vilna, III 66 f

Dr. Herzl enthusiastically received by Jews of, III 84

Jews of, assured by Svyatopolk-Mirski of just treatment, III 99

Jewish community of, signs petition for equal rights, III 108; and demands self-determination, III 109

league for Attainment of Equal Rights formed in (1905), III 111

Jewish community of, protests against denial of Jewish franchise, III 121 f

place of publication, II 115, 126, 131, 134, 136, 226

ha-Karmel, published in, II 217

ha-Zeman, Hebrew daily, published in, III 162

Sabbatai Cohen (*Shak*), famous Talmudist, native of, I 130, 157 f

Budny, Christian theologian, of, I 136

Moses Rivkes, Talmudist, of, I 200

Elijah of; see Elijah of Vilna

Masalski, bishop of, employs Berek Yoselovich, I 294

Saul Katzenellenbogen, rabbi of, II 115

M. A. Ginzberg, Hebrew writer, resident of, II 133 f

Abraham Baer Lebensohn, Hebrew poet, resident of, II 134 f

Micah Joseph Lebensohn, Hebrew poet, native of, II 226

Levanda, Russian-Jewish writer, resident of, II 239

S. M. Dubnow, author of present work, resident of, III 112

See Vilna (government)

Vilna (province or government), annexed by Russia (1795), I 297

included in Pale (1794), I 317; (1835), I 39

includes later government of Kovno, I 317

Jews of, invited to elect deputies (1807), I 349

Poles threaten to massacre Russians and Jews in, I 357

Samuel Epstein elected Jewish deputy from, I 393

Poles and Jews forbidden to acquire estate in (1864), II 173

placed under jurisdiction of Muravyov, II 188

Friesel, governor of, suggests Jewish reforms, I 325 ff

governor of, testifies to loyalty of Jews to Russia (1812), I 357

governor-general of, opposes admission of Jewish artisans into Russian Interior, II 168

- Muravyov, governor-general of, pursues policy of Russification, II 183, 239
- Totleben, governor-general of, favors forbidding Jews to settle in villages, II 276
- Kakhanov, governor-general of, insults Jewish deputation of welcome, II 383
- governor of, favors abrogation of Pale (1895), III 11
- Pahlen, governor of, favors mitigation of restrictive laws, III 93
- Svyatopolk-Mirski, governor-general, promises Jewish deputation favorable treatment of Jews, III 99
- Localities in:
- Ilya, II 114
- Mikhailishok, II 134
- Troki, see Troki
- Volozhin, I 380, II 57, 113
- Vinaver, M., Russian-Jewish lawyer, acts as counsel for Jewish victims of Kishinev pogrom, III 92; and Homel pogrom, III 102
- member of Central Bureau of League for Equal Rights, III 112
- elected president of League for Equal Rights, III 134
- deputy to First Duma, III 134
- leader of Constitutional Democratic party, III 134
- denounces in Duma oppression of Jews, III 136; and pogroms, III 139
- head of Jewish People's Group, III 146
- Vinchevski, M., publishes Hebrew periodical *Asefat Hakamim*, II 223
- Vinnitza, Kahal of, appealed to by Vilna Gaon against Hasidim, I 373
- Virgil, *Aeneid* of, translated into Hebrew, II 226
- Visconti, papal nuncio at Warsaw, ordered to report on ritual murder trial in Poland, I 179
- Vishniovetzki (*Polish*, Wisniewiecki), Count Jeremiah, Polish commander, protects Jews against Cossacks, I 149, 161
- Vishniovetzki (*Polish*, Wisniewiecki), Michael, Polish king (1669-1673), son of former, ratifies Jewish privileges, I 160
- Vistula, river, lands on banks of, attract Jews, I 39
- provinces on banks of, invaded by Swedes, I 154
- Plotzk, on banks of, I 243
- Poles perish in, defending Warsaw against Russians, I 296
- Hasidism established on banks of, I 384

- Gher, or Goora Kalvarya, on left bank of, II 122
- Poles admit only "one nation on banks of," III 168
- Vital, Hayyim, Cabalist, I 134
- Vitebsk (city), Jews of, defend city against invading Russians, I 154
- Jews of, robbed by Cossacks and maltreated or exiled, I 154
- Jews of, made prisoners of war by Russians, I 245
- Mendel of, hasidic leader, I 234, II 117
- Dyerzhavin writes "Opinion" on Jews in, I 330
- pogrom at, III 101
- Jewish community of, protests against denial of Jewish franchise, III 121
- See Vitebsk (government)
- Vitebsk (government), annexed by Russia (1772), I 186, 262
- Jews from, made prisoners of war by Russia, I 245
- formerly called government of Polotzk, I 307, 315, 317
- forms part of White Russia, I 307, 315
- included in Pale (1794), I 317; (1835), II 40
- Jews of, visit Smolensk and Moscow, I 315
- Jews of, invited to elect deputies, I 349
- Jewish deputies from, I 393
- expulsion of Jews from villages of, begun (1808), I 351
- Jews, expelled from villages of, economically ruined, I 364
- Jews elected to municipal offices in, I 368
- expulsion of Jews from villages of, decreed (1823), I 406
- Supreme Court acquits Velizh Jews accused of ritual murder, II 76
- placed under jurisdiction of Muravyov, II 188
- Cities in:
- Kreslavka, I 331
- Polotzk, I 243
- Velizh, II 75
- See Vitebsk (city), and Russia, White
- Vitovt (also Vitold, or Witold; *Polish*, Witowt), grand duke of Lithuania (1388-1430), protects Jews of Lithuania, I 35
- grants Jews charter (1388), and additional privileges (1389), I 59
- Vladimir (*Polish*, Włodzimierz; Volhynia), early Jewish community in, I 59
- Vladimir, prince of Kiev, receives Khazar Jews (986), I 30
- Vladimir, Monomakh, prince of Kiev, stops anti-Jewish riots, I 32

- Vladimir**, grand duke, brother of Alexander III., holds Russian revolutionaries responsible for pogroms, II 260
- Vladimir**, archbishop (Mitropolit) of St. Petersburg, encourages pogroms, III 125
- Vladislav** (also Wladislaus and Leidislaus; *Polish*, Wladyslaw), **Lokietek**, Polish ruler, unites Great Poland and Little Poland, and assumes royal title (1319), I 42, 50
- Vladislav** (*Polish*, Wladyslaw) IV., Polish king (1632-1648), I 91
 tolerant to other creeds, I 97
 confirms Jewish privileges, I 98
 makes erection of synagogues and establishment of cemeteries dependent on royal permission, I 98
 restricts Jews in response to anti-Jewish petitions, I 98 f
 uprising of Khmelnitzki during reign of, I 144
 dies during uprising, I 145
 offered, as crown prince, Russian throne (1610), I 244
- Voislovitza**, near Lublin, Jews of, accused of ritual murder, I 178 f
- Volfovich**, Simeon, denounces abuses of Vilna Kahal, I 276
 persecuted and imprisoned, I 276
 advocates abolition of Kahal, I 276
- Volga**, river, Khazars move towards banks of, I 19
 Khazar capital situated at mouth of, I 23, 26, 28
 called Ityl by Khazars, I 26, 28
 bodies of alleged ritual murder victims found in, II 150
- Volhynia** (*Polish*, Volyn), forms part of Lithuania, I 59
 ceded to Poland (1569), I 110
 controlled economically by Polish magnates, I 140
 uprising against Poles in (1648), I 145
 returned to Poland (1667), I 159
 annexed by Russia (1793), I 292
 included in Pale (1794), I 317, (1804), I 342; (1835), II 39
 called formerly government of Izyaslav, I 317
 Cossack massacres in (1648), I 148 f
 Jews decimated in, I 157
 Jews of, slain by haidamacks (18th century), I 182 f
 Jewish *arendar* of, oppressed by Polish squire, I 266
 Jews of, suffer from Polish civil war (1792), I 292

Polish nobility of, advocates anti-Jewish restrictions, I 324

Jews of, hold conference and decide to appeal to Tzar (1798), I 324 f

Jews of, invited by Alexander I. to elect deputies, I 349

woolen mills established by Jews in, I 363

Jews of, indifferent towards Polish revolution (1831), I 107

statistics of Jews in, II 194

pogroms in, II 256

represented on Council of Four Lands, I 110

Jewish Provincial Assembly (or Dietine) of, I 113; called "Volhynia Synagogue," I 196

Talmudism deteriorates in, I 199

intellectual development of Jews of, differs from that in North-west, I 221

Besht travels about in, I 224

Baer of Mezherich, hasidic preacher in, I 227

Hasidism spreads in, I 229, 274

becomes hasidic headquarters, I 229 f

Hasidism triumphant in, I 371, II 119 f

Gubernatorial Kahal of, appealed to by Vilna Gaon, against Hasidism, I 373

Isaiah Horowitz (*Shelo*), Cabalist, rabbi in, I 135

Levi Itzhok of Berdychiev, leader of Hasidim in, I 382

Menashe Ilyer, Talmudist and writer, resides in, II 115

Isaac Baer Levinsohn, native of, II 125 ff

rabbis of, request Levinsohn to refute blood accusation, II 131

Localities in:

Chudnov, III 117

Kremenetz, II 125 *

Old (Staro-)Constantinov, II 21 f

Ostrog, I 125

Rovno, III 99

Slavuta, II 42, 123

Troyanov, III 116

Zaslav, I 116, 177

Zhitomir, see Zhitomir

Volkspartei, see Jewish National Party

Volozhin (government of Vilna), yeshibah of, established by Hayyim Volozhiner, pupil of Vilna Gaon (1803), I 380 f

sends forth large number of pupils, II 113

* Page 125, line 3 from bottom, read Volhynia, instead of Podolia. The mistake is due to a confusion with Kamenetz.

- Itzhok Itzhaki, president of, member of Rabbinical Commission, II 57
- Volozhiner, Hayyim; see Volozhin
- Voltaire, praises polemical treatise of Isaac Troki, I 138
- Vorontzov, governor-general of New Russia, protests against proposed "assortment" of Jews by Nicholas I., II 64 ff, 142
- Voronyezh (city and government), "Judaizers" spread in, I 401
- archbishop of, reports to Government on "Judaizers," I 401 f
- Senate refers to "Judaizers" in, I 404
- pogrom in city of (1905), III 130
- Voskhod ("The Sunrise"), Jewish weekly and monthly, in Russian, published in St. Petersburg, II 221, 277, 332, 372, III 162
- opposes organizing of emigration, as subversive of emancipation, II 298 f
- protests against anti-Semitic speech of governor-general of Kiev, II 317
- opposes "Love of Zion" movement, II 332
- suppressed by censor, II 407
- publishes Dubnow's "Letters on Old and New Judaism," III 52
- leaning towards nationalism, III 59
- suppressed for protesting against Kishinev massacre, III 77
- appeals to patriotism of Jews in Russo-Japanese War, III 94
- warns against impending pogroms, III 96
- confiscated by censor, III 98
- points out rightlessness of Jews, III 124
- Voyevodas (*Polish*, Wojewoda), high Polish officials, name and functions of, explained, I 46
- correspond to *Starostas* in Lithuania, I 60
- exercise, as representatives of sovereign, special jurisdiction over Jews, I 46, 94
- V. courts, see Courts
- Jewish Diétines assemble by order of, I 196 f
- instructed by Stephen Batory to protect Jews, I 89
- accept bribes, I 76
- begin to oppress Jews, I 169

- V. of Cracow accepts bribes from Jews and their opponents, I 76
- V. of Kiev owns city of Uman, I 184
- V. of Lemberg, or Red Russia, upholds prestige of Kahal, I 190; grants constitution to Kahal of Lemberg (1692), I 191
- V. of Vilna sides with Kahal against rabbi, I 276; imprisons Simeon Volfovich, opponent of Kahal, I 276
- Voyevodstvo (*Polish*, Wojewodstwo), name for Polish province, term explained, I 46, 76
- Voznitsin, Alexander, captain in Russian navy, converted by Borukh Leibov to Judaism, I 251 f
- burned at stake in St. Petersburg (1738), I 253
- Vperyod ("Forward"), Russian revolutionary periodical in London, II 223
- Vratislav, prince of Bohemia, robs Jews fleeing to Poland, I 41
- Vyatka (government) cantonists carried to, II 24
- Vyberg (Finland), V. Manifesto, protesting against dissolution of First Duma, signed by Jewish deputies, III 139
- signatories to, prosecuted, III 142
- Vyelepoliski, Marquis, Polish statesman, secures assent of Alexander II. to Act of Emancipation of Polish Jews (1862), II 181, 195
- Vyestnik Russkikh Yevreyev ("Herald of Russian Jews"), Russian Jewish periodical, II 221
- Waad Arba Aratzoth ("Council of Four Lands"), central organization of Polish Jewry, pronunciation of word *Waad*, I 108
- grows out of conferences of rabbis and Kahal leaders, I 108 f; which meet at fair of Lublin, I 109; at initiative of Shalom Shakhna, rabbi of Lublin, I 123; exercising judicial as well as administrative and legislative functions, I 109 f
- presided over by Mordecai Jaffe, I 127
- presided over by Joshua Falk Cohen, I 128
- meets periodically at Lublin and Yaroslav, I 110, 194
- composition of, I 110
- provincial *Waad*s represented on, I 113, 196 f
- oligarchic character of, I 195
- acts as court of appeals, I 111
- decides litigations between Kahals, I 193

- activities of, stimulate rabbinical learning, I 126 f
 regulates inner life of Jews, I 111 f, 152, 188 f
 concerned about maintenance of Talmud Torahs and yeshibahs, I 195
 exercises censorship over Hebrew books, I 195 f
 issues *herem* against Frankists, I 214
 appoints *Shtadlans* to represent Jews before Government, I 111, 193
 apportions head-tax among Kahals, I 181, 189 f, 194
 authority of, in apportioning head-tax upheld by King Sobieski (1687), I 194
 authority of, undermined by withdrawing right of apportioning head-tax (1764), I 181, 197
 meetings of, forbidden by diet of 1764, I 198
- Waad Kehilloth Rashioth Dimedinath Lita** ("Council of the Principal Communities of the Province of Lithuania"), central organization of Lithuanian Jews, formed in 1623, I 112
 provincial Waads represented on, I 113, 196
 meets periodically, I 194
 functions of, I 112 f
- cultivates Jewish education, I 195
 appoints *Shtadlans* to represent Jews before Government, I 193
 apportions head-tax among Jews, I 181
- Waddington**, English representative at Berlin Congress, favors emancipation of Jews, I 202
- Wagenseil**, German professor, publishes Isaac Troki's *Hizzuk Emuna*, I 138
- Wahl**, Saul, legendary king of Poland, I 94
- Wahl, Von**, governor of Vilna, flogs Jewish workingmen, I 67
- Wallachia**, Jacob Frank settles in, I 212
 Besht born on border of, I 222; see Moldavo-Wallachia
- Warsaw** (*Polish*, Warszawa), capital of Poland, I 85, 111
 capital of duchy of Warsaw, I 298
 meeting-place of Polish diet, I 76, 98, 99, 111, 160, 165, 169, 171, 181, 278, II 96; see Diet
- Khmelnitzki** moves towards, I 151
 conquered by Swedes (1655), I 154

- Russia maintains Resident at, I 279
- besieged by Russo-Russian troops (1794), I 293
- stormed by Suvarov, I 296
- annexed by Prussia (1795), I 296; held by it (1796-1806), I 385
- granted right of excluding Jews, I 85, 268
- Jews permitted temporary visits to, I 111, 268
- Serafinovich, converted Jew, invited to disputation in, to prove blood accusation, I 173 f
- Jews of, appeal to Polish king on behalf of Posen Jews, I 176
- Visconti, papal nuncio at, instructed to report on ritual murder cases, I 177
- Jacob Frank, baptized at, I 217 f; arrested at, and exiled to Chenstokhov, I 218; returns to, I 219
- Jews permitted to stay in, during sessions of diet (1768), I 268
- procedure in admitting Jews to, I 269
- Jews pay tax for sojourn in, I 269, II 95
- Polish dignitaries rent houses to Jews in outskirts of, I 269
- "New Jerusalem," district in, I 269
- Jews expelled from (1775), I 269
- Jews return surreptitiously to, I 269 f, 285
- burghers of, demand expulsion of Jews, I 285 f
- anti-Jewish riot at (1790), I 286 f
- Jews expelled from (1790), I 287
- Jews volunteer in defence of, I 293
- siege of, arouses patriotism of Berek Yoselovich, I 294; appeal for special Jewish regiment, II 295
- Jews display heroism in defence of, I 296
- Jews barred from principal streets of, (1809), I 300, II 94; exception made for widow of Berek Yoselovich, I 304
- assimilated Jews of, plead for special privileges, I 300
- representatives of Jewish community of, complain about disabilities, I 301 f
- "Enlightenment" among Jews of, I 385
- visited by Moses Montefiore, II 68
- visited by Altaras of Marseilles, II 69
- Tugendhold, Jewish assimilator in, II 98
- Jewish assimilators in, II 100 ff

- Congregational Board of, objects to special Jewish regiment, II 106
- Jewish militia participates in defence of (1831), II 106
- Congregational Board of, sends deputation to St. Petersburg to plead for equal rights, II 110
- adherents of hasidic dynasty of Gher numerous in, II 122
- assimilation in, II 177 f; assumes menacing proportions, II 213
- Jews of, display Polish patriotism in uprising against Russia (1861-1863), II 179 ff
- pogrom at (1881), II 280 ff
- archbishop of, endeavors to check pogrom, II 283
- prominent Poles of, offer to organize civil guard for protection of Jews, II 283; offer refused by governor-general of, II 283
- number of writers arrested at, II 291
- effect of pogrom in, upon Western Europe and America, II 283, 287
- governor-general of, reports to Tzar on pogroms in, II 284
- pogrom in, welcomed by Central Jewish Committee, II 310
- center of "Love of Zion" movement, II 376
- Jewish labor movement in, III 55
- economic progress of Jews in, III 166
- Jews of, instrumental in election of socialistic deputy to Duma, III 167
- Hebrew papers and periodicals published in, II 333, 372, III 58, 60, 162
- Yiddish papers and periodicals published in, III 59, 162
- Goora Kalvaryia (Gher), in vicinity of, II 122
- Kotzk, in vicinity of, I 303, II 122
- Praga, suburb of, I 294
- Way, Lewis, representative of London Bible Society, I 397
- submits memorandum to Alexander I. pleading for Jewish emancipation, I 398
- memorandum of, laid before Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle, I 398
- Weber, United States Commissioner to Russia, II 407
- Wertheimer, banking house of, in Vienna, exerts influence over Polish king, I 176
- Wessely, Naphtali Hirz, Hebrew poet, compared with A. B. Lebensohn, II 135
- Western Europe, Jewish diaspora in, I 13

- emigration from, into Poland, I 39 ff
- leading Jews of, invited by Russian Government to participate in work of enlightenment, II 67
- Jews of, intercede on behalf of Russian Jews, II 67 ff
- public opinion of, influences Russia, II 262
- effect of Warsaw pogrom on, II 283, 287
- emigration from Russia to, II 321, 408, 413
- Political Zionism originates in, III 42, 46
- Jews of, deny Jewish nationalism, III 53
- public opinion of, agitated over Kishinev massacre, III 78
- "Western Region," term explained, II 16
- number of Jews in, II 168
- Jews form majority of population in cities of, III 11
- Westminster, duke of, addresses Guildhall meeting in London against oppression of Russian Jews, II 390 f
- White, Arnold, member of English parliament, sent by Baron Hirsch to Russia, II 417
- discusses Jewish question with Russian dignitaries, II 417
- visits Pale and is favorably impressed by Jews, II 418
- recommends regulation of emigration, II 418
- dispatched to Russia a second time, II 419
- White Russia, see Russia, White
- Wine grown by Jews in Palestine, II 376; see Liquor
- Witsen, burgomaster of Amsterdam, petitions Peter the Great to admit Jews into Russia, I 246
- Witte, Russian Minister of Finance, advocates liquor monopoly as means of dislodging Jews from villages, III 17; and eliminating Jewish "exploitation," III 22
- favors mitigation of Jewish disabilities, III 107 f
- Jews address petitions for equal rights to, III 108 f
- receives, as president of Council of State, memorandum on pogroms, III 125
- appointed Prime Minister, author of manifesto of October 17, 1905, III 127
- adopts policy of oppression, III 131
- League for Equal Rights votes down proposal to send delegation to, III 131
- Wolff, Sir H. D., member of English parliament, interpellates Government concerning pogroms, II 262

Worms, Baron Henry De, member of English parliament, interpellates Government concerning pogroms, II 262
Gladstone replies to interpellation of, II 292

Yadviga (*Polish*, Jadwiga), Polish queen, marries Yaguello, grand duke of Lithuania (1386), I 54

Yaguello, Vladislav II. (*Polish*, Wladyslaw Jagiello), king of Poland and grand duke of Lithuania (1386-1434), I 54
converted from paganism to Catholicism, I 55

restricts commercial operations of Jews, I 58

Lithuania ruled by Vitovt, as representative of, I 59

extinction of Y. dynasty, I 88 f, 91

Yalta, health resort in Crimea, Jews expelled from, II 428 f, III 18 f

Yampol (*Volhynia*), ritual murder trial at, I 178

Yaroshevski, Russian-Jewish novelist and physician, protests against affront to Jewish army surgeons, II 320

Yaroslav (*Polish*, Jaroslaw; *Galicja*), meeting-place of Council of Four Lands, I 110, 194

Yekaterinoslav (city), Orshanski, Russian-Jewish writer, native of, II 238

pogrom at (1883), II 358 ff; (October, 1905), III 128

Yekaterinoslav (government), territory of, raided by Turks and defended by Cossacks, I 143

territory of, opened to Jews (1791), I 316

tract of land in, set aside for Jewish converts (1820), I 400

included in Pale (1794), I 317; (1835), II 403

Jewish agricultural colonies in, II 72

Rostov and Taganrog transferred from, to territory of Don army and barred to Jews (1887), II 346

pogroms in (1883), II 360

Yelisavetgrad (government of Kherson), Government agents appear in, to prepare pogroms, II 248

pogroms at (1881), II 249 ff, 333; (October, 1905), III 128

"Spiritual Biblical Brotherhood," heterodox Jewish sect, founded by Jacob Gordin in (1881), II 333 f

Yellow Waters (*Polish*, Zolte Wody), Polish army defeated by Cossacks near, I 145

- Yemetyanov, Theodore**, alleged victim of ritual murder, II 75 f
- Yeremyeyeva**, Russian woman, accuses Jews of Velizh of ritual murder, II 75
convicted by Council of State, II 82
- Yeshibah**, or Talmudic Academy, imparts higher rabbinical education, I 114 f
secular studies excluded from, I 120, 277
maintained by Council of Four Lands, I 195
sanctioned by Sigismund II. under name of *gymnazium*, I 115
head of, or *rosh-yeshibah*, granted wide powers by Polish kings, I 115 f; enjoys great distinction, I 119
Y's spread all over Poland and Lithuania, I 115 f
Y's of Lithuania adopt method of Talmud study of Vilna Gaon, I 380 f
important Y's in Lithuania, II 113 f
negative effect of, II 113 f
placed under Government supervision (1842), II 56
Joshua Falk Cohen, head of, in Lemberg, I 128
Moses Isserles, head of, in Cracow, I 123
- Nathan Spira, head of, in Cracow, I 135
- Isaiah Horowitz (*Shelo*), studies in, of Lemberg and Cracow, I 135
- Eliezer, head of, in Homel, I 150
- Abel Gumbiner, head of, in Kalish, I 200
- Hayyim Volozhiner, head of, in Volozhin, I 381
- Itzhok Itzhaki, head of, in Volozhin, II 57
- Yesod Hama'Alah**, Jewish colony in Galilee, II 375
- Yevrey**, Russian term for Jew, officially introduced, I 320
- Yevreyskaya Biblioteka** ("Jewish Library"), Jewish periodical in Russian, II 221
- Orshanski contributes to, II 238
- Yeveryskaya Starina** ("Jewish Antiquity"), Jewish periodical in Russian, III 160
- Yevreyski Mir** ("Jewish World"), Jewish weekly in Russian, III 162
- Yeziarski**, Polish statesman, chairman of Jewish Commission of Polish Diet, I 287
recognizes economic importance of Polish Jews, I 287 f
defends Jews in Diet, I 289

- Yiddish, brought by Jews from Germany, I 43, 114
 translations of prayers in, used by women, I 121
 read by women and lower classes, I 202
 Mendel Lewin translates Bible into, I 388; attacked by Tobias Feder, I 388
 Y. press, II 217 f, III 58 f, 162
 Y. literature, III 61 ff, 162
 Mendele Mokher Sforim turns to, II 232
 Gordin writes plays in, II 335
 Frug, Russian-Jewish poet, writes in, III 63, 78
 used as propaganda means by Jewish Labor movement, III 56 f
 position of, hotly discussed, III 161
 adherents of (Yiddishists), III 161
- Yosefovich, Hirsh, rabbi of Khelm, author of Polish pamphlet defending Jews, I 283
- Yosefovich, Abraham, Jewish tax-farmer in Poland, I 73
 converted to Christianity and appointed Chancellor of Lithuanian Exchequer, I 73
- Yosefovich, Michael, brother of former, Jewish tax-farmer in Poland, 172 f
- appointed by Sigismund I. "senior" of Lithuanian Jews, I 72 f, 104
- Yoselovich (*Polish*, Joselowicz) Berek, Polish-Jewish patriot, I 293 ff
 accompanies Bishop Masalski to Paris, I 294
 offers to form special Jewish regiment, I 294 f
 regiment of, displays heroism, I 296
 flees to France, I 296 f
 returns to Poland and dies heroic death, I 303
 eulogized by Pototzki, I 303 f
 widow of, granted special permission to sell liquor, I 304
- Yosko, Jewish tax-farmer in Poland, I 71
- Yudich, Saul, Jewish tax-farmer in Lithuania, I 94
 possibly identical with Saul Wahl, legendary king of Poland, I 94
- Yurkevich, Peter, accused of stealing host for Jews, I 101 f
- Yurkovski, Moscow police commissioner, makes raid on Jews, II 403
- Yushkevicher, Yankel, of Saratov, accused of ritual murder, II 151

- sentenced, with son, to penal servitude, II 152
- pardoned by Alexander II. through intercession of Crémieux, II 153
- Zadok**, Messianic propagandist in Lithuania, I 208
- Zaleshkovska, Catherine**, suspected of leanings towards Judaism and burned at stake, I 79 f
- Zalman Shneorsohn**, or **Zalman Borukhovich**; see **Shneor Zalman**
- Zamyatin**, Minister of Justice, defends Jews of Saratov accused of ritual murder, II 152
- Zamoiski, Andreas**, Polish chancellor, suggests reforms for Jews of Poland, I 271 ff
- Zamoshch** (*Polish*, **Zamosc**), Joel Baal-Shem of, I 203
- Zangwill, Israel**, founder of Territorialism, III 144
- Zaporozhians**, the, or **Zaporozhian Cossacks**, name explained, I 143
- raid Turks and fight Tatars, I 143
- cultivate relations with Ukrainian Cossacks, I 143
- form alliance with Tatars, I 144
- exterminate Jews and Poles, I 145 f
- plunder Jews of Vitebsk, I 154
- form bands attacking Poles and Jews, I 182 f
- petition Russian Government to admit Jews to fairs of Little Russia, I 250
- See **Cossacks**
- Zarudny**, Counsel of Jewish victims of Homel pogrom, III 102
- Zaryadye**, part of Moscow illegally inhabited by Jews, II 403
- Zaslav** (*Polish*, **Zaslaw**; **Volhynia**), Cossack massacre at (1648), I 149
- ritual murder case in (1747), I 172, 177 f
- Nathan Hannover** of, see **Hannover, Nathan**
- Zayonchek**, Polish general, flees from Poland, I 296
- appointed viceroy of Poland, II 91
- opposes measures in favor of Jews, II 93
- makes insulting remark about Jews, II 94
- Zborov, Treaty of**, between Poles and Cossacks (1649), I 151
- not kept by Polish Government, I 152
- Zebulun**, king of Khazars, I 26

- Zederbaum, Alexander, editor of *ha-Melitz* in St. Petersburg, II 217
 refutes charge of ritual murder, I 204
 publishes *Vyestnik Russkikh Yevreyev*, I 221
- Zelenoy, city-governor of, warns Jews to use polite manners, II 383
- Zelig, see Jacob Selig
- Zelikin, Isaac, called Rabbi Itzele, secures acquittal of Mstislavl Jews, II 86 f
- Zelva (province of Grodno), rabbis issue *herem* against Hasidim at fair of, I 237
- Zemstvos (local self-governments in Russia), term explained, II 173
 Jews admitted to (1864), II 173
 rights of, curtailed by Alexander III., II 379, 386
 Jews barred from (1890), II 385 f
 liberal Z. voice desire for constitution, III 7 f
 refuse to appoint Jewish physicians, III 27
 conference of, in St. Petersburg protests against autocracy (1904), III 105
 combined deputation to Nicholas II. of municipalities and Z. express desire for abolition of restrictions (1905), III 122
- Zetlin, Yevzik, of Velizh, arrested on charge of ritual murder, II 75, 77
- Zetlin, Hannah, wife of former, arrested on same charge, II 77
- Zeno, emperor of Byzantium, persecutes Jews, I 18
- Zhelezniak, Cossack leader, massacres Jews (1768), I 183 f
- Zhitomir, see Zhytomir
- Zhmud (Samogitia) region in North-west Russia, I 293, II 133
- Zhukhovski, Stephen, Polish priest, accuses Jews of ritual murder, I 172 f
- Zhyd (and Zhydovski), Russian derogatory appellation for Jew, I 184, 320, 403, II 14, 78, III 155
 officially abolished by Catherine II., I 320
- Zhytomir (*Polish*, Zytomir; Volhynia), ritual murder trial at (1753), I 178
- Kahal of, appealed to by Vilna Gaon against Hasidism, I 373
- printing-press of, II 43
- Rabbinical Institute opened in (1847), II 59, 174; closed (1873), II 177; graduates of, un-Jewish, II 212

- Teachers Institute in, closed (1873), II 177
- old privilege of, excluding Jews from parts of town, abolished by Alexander II., II 172
- Mendele Mokher Sforim* removes to, II 232
- School of Handicrafts in, closed by Alexander III., II 347
- pogrom in (1905), III 115 ff
- Jews of Chudnov attempt to defend Jews of Zhytomir and are massacred, III 116 f
- Jewish community of, protests against denial of Jewish franchise, III 121
- Zikhron Jacob**, Jewish colony in Galilee, II 375
- Zionism**, before Herzl, called in Hebrew *Hibbat Zion* (in Russian, *Palestinophilstvo*) "Love of Zion," preached by Lilienblum, II 237, 328 ff
- expounded by Pinsker, II 220, 330 ff
- adopted by Lilienblum, II 237
- engages in colonization of Palestine, II 375 f, 422 f
- adherents of, assemble in Katowitz (1884), II 376; and Druskeniki (1887), II 377
- legalized by Russian Government (1890), II 377
- center of, in Odessa and Warsaw, II 376
- wins over orthodoxy, II 376 f
- failure of, III 42
- leaders of, join political Zionism, III 47
- modified by Ahad Ha'am, II 423, III 49 f
- rise of political Z., III 41 ff
- proclaimed by Herzl, III 42 f
- First Zionist Congress (1897), III 44
- political and cultural tendency within, III 44 f
- effects of, III 46 f
- Spiritual Z., or Ahad Ha'amism, III 41, 48 ff
- Russian Zionists Convention at Minsk, III 51
- inadequacy of, III 51 f
- combined with Socialism by *Poale-Zion*, III 57 f, 145
- Nahum Sokolow declares allegiance to, III 60
- reflected in poems of Frug, III 63
- indifference to, denounced by Bialik, III 63
- forbidden in Russia by Plehve, III 82 f
- Plehve promises support of, as result of Dr. Herzl's visit, III 83
- Vilna Zionists give ovation to Dr. Herzl, III 84
- crisis of, at Sixth Congress, III 84 f
- Schism between Palestinianism and Territorialism, III 85

- organize self-defence at Homel, III 87
- Shmaryahu Levin, representative of, deputy to First Duma, III 134
- forms contrast to Social Democracy, III 143
- Seventh Zionist Congress reaffirms allegiance to Palestine, III 144
- Russian Zionist Convention at Helsingfors (1906) recognizes rights of diaspora, III 144 f
- adherents of, secede from League for Equal Rights, III 146
- declared illegal by Senate, III 152
- Znamya** ("The Banner") anti-Semitic paper in St. Petersburg, III 70
- demands execution of Dashevski, assailant of Krushevan, III 81 f
- Zohar**, the, cabalistic standard work, study of, not permitted before the age of thirty, I 214
- Frankists recognize authority of, I 214; call themselves Zoharists, 214
- used by Besht to foretell the future, I 224
- Zonch**, Russian general, maltreats Jews on his estates, I 328
- Zubov**, Count, governor-general of New Russia, secures equal rights for Karaites, I 318
- member of "Jewish Commission" appointed by Alexander I., I 335
- Zunz**, refutes charges of Abbé Chiarini, II 104
- Zverovich**, synagogue built in, by Borukh Leibov of Smolensk, I 249, 252

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